

97-84244-4

Gladstone, William Ewart

Speeches of...Right Hon.
W.E. Gladstone, M.P.

London

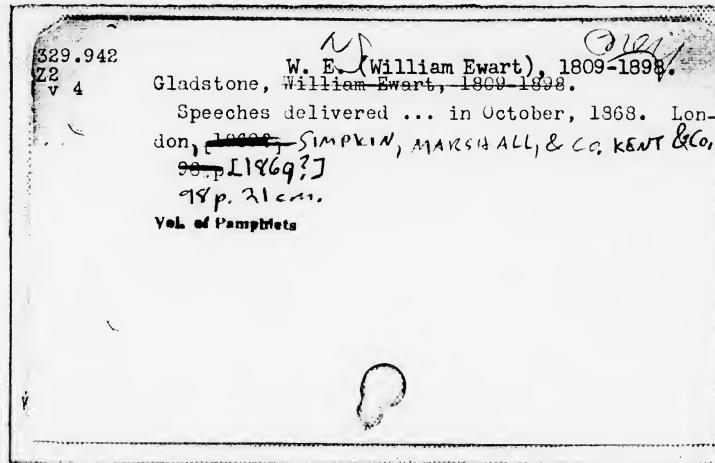
[1869?]

97-84244-4
MASTER NEGATIVE #

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
PRESERVATION DIVISION

BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

ORIGINAL MATERIAL AS FILMED - EXISTING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD



RESTRICTIONS ON USE: Reproductions may not be made without permission from Columbia University Libraries.

TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm

REDUCTION RATIO: 9:1

IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA IIA IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 11-12-97

INITIALS: JP

TRACKING #: 29328

FILMED BY PRESERVATION RESOURCES, BETHLEHEM, PA.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC IRREGULARITIES

MAIN ENTRY: Gladstone, William Ewart.....

.....
Speeches of the Right Hon. W.E. Gladstone, M.P......

Bibliographic Irregularities in the Original Document:

List all volumes and pages affected; include name of institution if filming borrowed text.

_____ **Page(s) missing/not available:** _____

_____ **Volume(s) missing/not available:** _____

Illegible and/or damaged page(s): **Text obscured - p. 5; Text missing - p. 31-32**

_____ **Page(s) or volume(s) misnumbered:** _____

_____ **Bound out of sequence:** _____

_____ **Page(s) or volume(s) filmed from copy borrowed from:** _____

_____ **Other:** _____

_____ **Inserted material:** _____

TRACKING#: MSH29328

406-93 b64 321
SPEECHES
Z 2

SPEECHES

OF THE RIGHT HON.

W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.,

DELIVERED AT

WARRINGTON, ORMSKIRK, LIVERPOOL, SOUTHPORT,

NEWTON, LEIGH, AND WIGAN.

IN OCTOBER, 1868.

LONDON:

SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & Co. KENT & Co.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

No. 1
SPEECHES

OF THE RIGHT HON.

W. E. GLADSTONE, M.P.,

DELIVERED AT

WARRINGTON, ORMSKIRK, LIVERPOOL, SOUTHPORT,

NEWTON, LEIGH, AND WIGAN,

IN OCTOBER, 1868.



LONDON:
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & Co. KENT & Co.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN THE

TOWN HALL, WARRINGTON.

OCTOBER 12TH, 1868.

LONDON:
ROBERT E. BURT, PRINTER, WINE OFFICE COURT, E.C.

329.942
22
v.4

MR. RIGBY and gentlemen, together with my friend, and I hope I may say my future colleague, Mr. Grenfell,—I have met to-day with such a reception in Warrington as I am quite certain that neither of us will readily forget. We are aware, gentlemen, that within the limits of the borough a contest is in progress of no ordinary interest to you all, and with respect to which, though it would be unbecoming in me to dwell upon it particularly, I cannot but express the confident and sanguine belief that some five weeks—five short weeks—from the time at which I now have the honour to address you will see the town of Warrington represented after the manner of our Constitution in the British House of Commons by the free votes of the people, and in the person of my friend Mr. Rylands. But, gentlemen, the duty which, in conjunction with Mr. Grenfell, I have to perform to-night is to address you in respect to the election for the south-western division of the county. And perhaps, gentlemen, I may be permitted to begin by stating that, as a matter of fact, the contest in which Lancashire men are now engaged with Lancashire men is not a contest of our seeking. The history of its origin is this. As you are aware, the southern division of the county is at present represented by two supporters of the present Administration, together with myself. Well, I think that is a distribution to which at least the supporters of the Government—a minority of the House of Commons—have no great reason to complain. However, in the exercise of their wisdom, or else of their zeal, our opponents early in the present year began to take for the modest purpose of securing to themselves the whole of th

representation in this division; and you, gentlemen, who are electors and of Liberal opinions are to answer whether you will submit to this exclusion which was attempted to be enforced. Perhaps you will ask me how it was attempted, and there is no difficulty in the answer. It was not attempted to affect your opinion or even to appeal to your prejudices. It was attempted in a manner which it is easy to understand. It was attempted by that most ingenious but frequently effectual method of clubbing together to make a long purse. That being so, the Liberal party in this division adopted such precautionary measures as appeared to be justified for the purpose of ascertaining its sentiments, and came to the conclusion, first, that they would not submit to be excluded from the representation, and, secondly, to accept the challenge which they gave, and to seek to return to Parliament two representatives of Liberal opinions for the county. Well, the campaign is to begin to-day. It is not the 12th of August, a day fatal to many of our fellow-creatures; but it is the 12th of October, a day on which we set out for a season in which I believe our motives are at least as elevated as the motives of those who commonly take to the moor on the 12th of August, and in which, I must add, that our sport will be quite as good. We are in for it now, and we must go through with it. I agree with the resolution which characterises the men of England, and, not least, the men of Lancashire. We ought to consider questions of public interest with a determination in no instance wilfully to misconstrue our adversaries' intentions or their acts, but with a firm determination to beat them if we can. The war to be carried on this evening is a war of argument, and I rejoice to think that we have arrived at a period when the masses of the people of this country are supplied, through the inestimable machinery of the daily press, and, above all, of the cheap press, with the means of bringing an enlightened judgment to bear upon questions of public interest and policy. I cannot depart from this subject without observing that the establishment of the cheap press was not secured without a struggle, and that we who stand here upon this platform are the representatives in our humble sphere of those who procured for the people that inestimable benefit. It was, gentlemen, by many efforts in the front both of enemies and of half-hearted friends; it was in the front, I am sorry to say, of the misguided action of the hereditary branch of the Legislature, that those of us who were determined to set free the press of this country, persevered in our purpose, and obtained for the country the enormous advantage which they now derive from having brought to their doors from day to day information upon public affairs, which, although it is not in every instance infallible, yet contains within itself the secret and means of the cure of this defect, because it is, though not infallible, yet free; and the errors of opinion which proceed from one quarter are corrected by the more just judgment of another. Well, gentlemen, that is the footing upon which we meet, so far as regards your means of information; and we meet likewise, as I am rejoiced to think, upon a ground in which the borough franchise to a very large extent, and in which the county franchise to some considerable extent, now stands upon a basis wider than that upon which it stood when I last had the honour to submit my claims to the constituency of Lancashire. Gentlemen, it would not be unnatural if I were to presume to detain you upon the subject of the important change which has occurred in our Parliamentary constitution. It

would not be unnatural even on account of the moment and the epoch of that change. There would still be more cause for it on account of circumstance less satisfactory—I mean, the particular provisions of the Act for amending the representation of the people, which I must say, ~~.....~~ been perversely and wilfully so constructed as to impose upon the people, together with the benefits of the franchise, a fine upon its exercise, to which I have objected from the first moment when it was named, and which I, for my part, shall be earnestly desirous to take the first opportunity of effacing from the statute-book of England. For the present, gentlemen, I won't detain you further on that subject, which is one that might open out into a multitude of details, because, in truth, we live in times when so many and such pregnant matters of public interest solicit our attention that we must be content to take them one by one, and endeavour to present each in turn in a clear and open light to the public mind. I think thus we shall probably best be enabled to contribute, so far as in us lies, to your exercising a right judgment upon the coming occasion. Of the great questions that are now before us, that which meets me, after the question of Parliamentary Reform, is that of the public expenditure of the country. I have, gentlemen, notwithstanding the crowded state of this assemblage, your patient attention; and I think it probable that I have the honour of addressing to-night, along with a large body of the electors for the county, a large number also of the electors for the town. The subject of public expenditure is one of great and standing importance. Other questions come and go, but this is a question that always abides. It is a question that sometimes comes into the very first place, and absorbs the attention of all men; but when it does so it is commonly because the evils have become too profound and too inveterate to admit of easy cure, and the true wisdom on all political subjects, but especially with regard to finance and public expenditure, is to direct the mind of the country to the consideration of them at a time before mischief has attained to unmanageable dimensions, in order that, if possible, a remedy, and an effective remedy, may be applied. This is the condition in which we now stand with reference to finance and to the expenditure of the country. I ventured about six weeks or two months ago to call attention to this subject in a meeting at St. Helen's. I stated with great moderation of language that of which I do not intend to qualify or retract one single iota. I intend, on the contrary, both to corroborate and enlarge the assertions I then made; but I did then state that within the two years during which the present Government had been in office the sum of £3,000,000 had been added to the permanent expenditure of the country. Now, I did not lay the exclusive blame of that augmentation upon the existing Administration, and the reason that I did not lay upon them the exclusive blame is that, as an observer of public affairs within and without the walls of the House of Commons, I cannot but be sensible of these two truths—in the first place, that the people are the natural defenders of their own purses; and, in the second place, that the vigilance and watchfulness with which the public mind has at some periods been directed to the control of the public expenditure have of late years been very greatly relaxed. You may think that is a reproach to you. You may think it a reproach which comes from one who has no right to make it. Gentlemen, your true friend is the man who speaks openly the sentiments of his mind

representation in this division; and you, gentlemen, who are electors and of Liberal opinions are to answer whether you will submit to this exclusion which was attempted to be enforced. Perhaps you will ask me how it was attempted, and there is no difficulty in the answer. It was not attempted to affect your opinion or even to appeal to your prejudices. It was attempted in a manner which it is easy to understand. It was attempted by that most ingenious but frequently effectual method of clubbing together to make a long purse. That being so, the Liberal party in this division adopted such precautionary measures as appeared to be justified for the purpose of ascertaining its sentiments, and came to the conclusion, first, that they would not submit to be excluded from the representation, and, secondly, to accept the challenge which they gave, and to seek to return to Parliament two representatives of Liberal opinions for the county. Well, the campaign is to begin to-day. It is not the 12th of August, a day fatal to many of our fellow-creatures; but it is the 12th of October, a day on which we set out for a season in which I believe our motives are at least as elevated as the motives of those who commonly take to the moor on the 12th of August, and in which, I must add, that our sport will be quite as good. We are in for it now, and we must go through with it. I agree with the resolution which characterises the men of England, and, not least, the men of Lancashire. We ought to consider questions of public interest with a determination in no instance wilfully to misconstrue our adversaries' intentions or their acts, but with a firm determination to beat them if we can. The war to be carried on this evening is a war of argument, and I rejoice to think that we have arrived at a period when the masses of the people of this country are supplied, through the inestimable machinery of the daily press, and, above all, of the cheap press, with the means of bringing an enlightened judgment to bear upon questions of public interest and policy. I cannot depart from this subject without observing that the establishment of the cheap press was not secured without a struggle, and that we who stand here upon this platform are the representatives in our humble sphere of those who procured for the people that inestimable benefit. It was, gentlemen, by many efforts in the front both of enemies and of half-hearted friends; it was in the front, I am sorry to say, of the misguided action of the hereditary branch of the Legislature, that those of us who were determined to set free the press of this country, persevered in our purpose, and obtained for the country the enormous advantage which they now derive from having brought to their doors from day to day information upon public affairs, which, although it is not in every instance infallible, yet contains within itself the secret and means of the cure of this defect, because it is, though not infallible, yet free; and the errors of opinion which proceed from one quarter are corrected by the more just judgment of another. Well, gentlemen, that is the footing upon which we meet, so far as regards your means of information; and we meet likewise, as I am rejoiced to think, upon a ground in which the borough franchise to a very large extent, and in which the county franchise to some considerable extent, now stands upon a basis wider than that upon which it stood when I last had the honour to submit my claims to the constituency of Lancashire. Gentlemen, it would not be unnatural if I were to presume to detain you upon the subject of the important change which has occurred in our Parliamentary constitution. It

would not be unnatural even on account of the moment and the ~~ex~~ that change. There would still be more cause for it on account of ~~the~~ circumstance less satisfactory—I mean, the particular provisions Act for amending the representation of the people, which I must say, ~~was~~, ~~had~~ been perversely and wilfully so constructed as to impose upon the people, together with the benefits of the franchise, a fine upon its exercise, to which I have objected from the first moment when it was named, and which I, for my part, shall be earnestly desirous to take the first opportunity of effacing from the statute-book of England. For the present, gentlemen, I won't detain you further on that subject, which is one that might open out into a multitude of details, because, in truth, we live in times when so many and such pregnant matters of public interest solicit our attention that we must be content to take them one by one, and endeavour to present each in turn in a clear and open light to the public mind. I think thus we shall probably best be enabled to contribute, so far as in us lies, to your exercising a right judgment upon the coming occasion. Of the great questions that are now before us, that which meets me, after the question of Parliamentary Reform, is that of the public expenditure of the country. I have, gentlemen, notwithstanding the crowded state of this assemblage, your patient attention; and I think it probable that I have the honour of addressing to-night, along with a large body of the electors for the county, a large number also of the electors for the town. The subject of public expenditure is one of great and standing importance. Other questions come and go, but this is a question that always abides. It is a question that sometimes comes into the very first place, and absorbs the attention of all men; but when it does so it is commonly because the evils have become too profound and too inveterate to admit of easy cure, and the true wisdom on all political subjects, but especially with regard to finance and public expenditure, is to direct the mind of the country to the consideration of them at a time before mischief has attained to unmanageable dimensions, in order that, if possible, a remedy, and an effective remedy, may be applied. This is the condition in which we now stand with reference to finance and to the expenditure of the country. I ventured about six weeks or two months ago to call attention to this subject in a meeting at St. Helen's. I stated with great moderation of language that of which I do not intend to qualify or retract one single iota. I intend, on the contrary, both to corroborate and enlarge the assertions I then made; but I did then state that within the two years during which the present Government had been in office the sum of £3,000,000 had been added to the permanent expenditure of the country. Now, I did not lay the exclusive blame of that augmentation upon the existing Administration, and the reason that I did not lay upon them the exclusive blame is that, as an observer of public affairs within and without the walls of the House of Commons, I cannot but be sensible of these two truths—in the first place, that the people are the natural defenders of their own purses; and, in the second place, that the vigilance and watchfulness with which the public mind has at some periods been directed to the control of the public expenditure have of late years been very greatly relaxed. You may think that is a reproach to you. You may think it a reproach which comes from one who has no right to make it. Gentlemen, your true friend is the man who speaks openly the sentiments of his mind

and his heart. I dare tell you this, that no Government, however well disposed, will at any time be able to keep the expenditure within moderate bounds unless backed up by the constant and unsleeping vigilance of public opinion. You will ask me, perhaps, why is this? I will tell you in one sentence. It is because there are knots and groups, and I may say classes, who have a constant and unsleeping interest in feeding themselves on the produce of the public industry. The counterpoise to this perfectly natural tendency on the part of individuals and classes is the vigilance of the public mind. The present Government goes to sleep; the other power never goes to sleep. On the contrary, it is watching for every opportunity to improve its position. And unfortunately there is an unhappy circumstance affecting the condition of the public servants. When men in private life improve their position, whether in commerce or manufacture, whether they improve the produce of the soil or the mines, they improve the position of all other classes; but, unhappily, when those who have an interest in the public service improve their own position they do so—and I do not see how the difficulty is to be avoided—rather with reference to their own interest than the advantage of the public. I do not say this for the purpose of fixing a stigma on the present Government. It has been my happy fortune to know in the public service men who have rendered labours to the public and have served the State with a spirit as disinterested and honourable to their station of life as any other class of men. It is the nature of the case that the public service should seek to improve its position, and that this improvement must take the form of an addition to the public burdens. I do not hesitate to say that the present Government has been slack, and I do not presume to impute the whole of the blame to them, but having said this much I will proceed to point out the blame which attaches to the present Government, and it is for you to say whether that description is fair or no. I ask you, gentlemen, something more. When I had the honour of addressing the electors of St. Helen's, and of laying before them the state of the case in very few and brief words in respect to the public expenditure, I went the length of suggesting to them—I hope it was not disrespectful—that they should ask our opponents, our honourable and respected opponents, Mr. Cross and Mr. Turner, what they thought of the matter, because Mr. Cross and Mr. Turner request you to return them to Parliament to support the men by whom this augmentation has been brought about; therefore I think it is a very serious matter that they should be prepared to justify to you that which has been done. It was with the greatest satisfaction I perceived that the public mind was ripe for receiving a statement of that kind, and that the arrow I ventured to discharge from the bow appeared to have gone home. It will not be my fault, gentlemen, if that discussion is stifled or suppressed. I wish to extend it and enlarge it. I don't wish to escape from blame. If you think the Liberal party has been to blame, let it by all means be laid upon us. The object really in view is that the public should receive advantage, and I presume to tell you this—the public have received advantage already. I presume upon a prophecy—let the elections go exactly in that way, in which we don't think they will go; let them result in the return of a triumphant majority on behalf of the present Government, still, gentlemen, I will venture to tell you that if you keep alive this question of the public expenditure—that fatal progression which has been established for the last

two or three years in the amount of the charges for the different branches of the public service—unless some great calamity should happen—which God forbid—I venture now on the 12th of October to tell you, you will have no increase of the estimates next year. I know that Mr. Cross, your neighbour, is a man not only of high character, but of great intelligence, and not only of great intelligence, but of great practical experience, particularly in those matters which relate to the management of pounds, shillings, and pence. It was, therefore, with a peculiar satisfaction that I observed that almost immediately after the meeting at St. Helen's the mind of Mr. Cross appeared to have been impressed with observations that had dropped at that meeting, and that he had addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a letter on the subject of the increase of the public expenditure. I am so much pleased and so much encouraged by the circumstance that Mr. Cross should thus have taken the matter so to heart, and addressed a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, moreover, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have answered that letter, and, not only this, but that the private and personal feelings thus gracefully expressed between these two gentlemen should have become part of the public property by being printed in all the journals of the country—why, gentlemen, after this you cannot be surprised if I tell you fairly that I mean to persevere in the same course, and I mean to find for Mr. Cross, if I can, the materials of another letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I have not the least doubt that if Mr. Cross faithfully transmits queries that I will endeavour to put into his mouth, the Chancellor of the Exchequer will find sufficient occasion for another reply to Mr. Cross. Gentlemen, my charge against the present Government is this, I did not do to them what their followers in the country did to us. I did not mix up with their estimates for the ordinary services of the country demands arising out of the wars that had to be carried on in this or that quarter of the globe, but, carefully separating every item that the most impartial or the most friendly judge could have desired to see excluded, I showed that the charges for the ordinary service of the country had been raised by three millions during the time for which the present Government had held office. Since that a great number of placards have been published, and I believe that I have got a very complete collection of them, but it does not require that I should trouble you with the whole of them. One is just like the other; they contain exactly the same misrepresentations—misrepresentations which I am quite certain have proceeded from nothing but the grossest and most absolute ignorance of the whole affair, because unless I were to interpose that charitable supposition I should be driven to a statement far more painful—namely, that the authors of these placards had not that minute and superlative regard for truth by which, after all, it is desirable that we should be governed in public as well as in private life. Various answers have been made to the statement that £3,000,000 had been added to the ordinary expenditure of the country, and that the present Government were in the main responsible for that charge. Let me consider what these answers are. One of the answers is a very peculiar one, and it is the one to which I will first refer, for it is to the fact that in former times, eight or ten years ago, and 15 and 20 years ago, the Conservative party were very economical, and the Liberals very extravagant. Suppose that were true,

would that mend the matter? If those who were formerly extravagant have become parsimonious, is it for you to refuse them the place of repentance? and if those who were formerly economical have become prodigal, is it for you to be prevented from awarding to them the sentence deserved by their guilt? It seems to me that this answer does not mend the matter in the least. It is wholly irrelevant. If the Liberal party really were in former times the advocates of extravagance, and have now become the advocates of parsimony, I can prove that by our recent conduct there is no reason why they should turn from us. Therefore the answer is wholly irrelevant even if it were true; but in addition to being irrelevant it is totally untrue. Let me take the points, and take them out of one of their own placards—a placard in Welsh and English. I hope the Welsh one is the same as the English, but I cannot say positively. In this placard there is a discussion upon the Income-tax, and it is stated that Lord Derby left the Income-tax at 5d. in the pound, and that Mr. Gladstone raised it to 7d. It is true that Lord Derby left the Income-tax at 5d. for his successors, but he never had the Income-tax at 5d. for himself. Now, if you will bear with me for a few moments I will give you the explanation. The placard says that in 1859, under the Government of Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, the Income-tax was 5d. in the pound. It is true that the law said 5d. in the pound, but how was the Income-tax then levied? You know that what you are charged on the Income-tax you are charged on profits for the previous year, and during the first half of that year that which is called 5d. in the pound was levied, and the Conservative Government received the produce not at 5d. in the pound, but at 7d. This statement which has been put forth is one of those instances which we may charitably construe as gross ignorance, and if we do not we must construe it as nothing less than downright falsehood. Another ingenious method that was resorted to was this. There is a long list of years of Income-tax, beginning at 7d., and going through various figures, and ending, in 1864-1865, at 6d. in the pound, but forgetting there was such a year as 1865-6, in which we were able honestly to reduce the Income-Tax to 4d.—I say honestly to reduce it—in consequence of the growth of the public revenue and of thrift in the public expenditure. But I go to that which is more relied upon. It is said that in 1858-9 we had low Estimates under a Conservative Government; that in 1859-60 we had high Estimates under a Liberal Government; and in 1860-1 we had Estimates on a higher scale. I must say a few words on each of these three points. It is perfectly true that in 1858-9 you had low Estimates, and I ask you who proposed those Estimates? Why, the Liberal Government. In the case of a country of this kind, with an expenditure of £70,000,000, which amounts to one-tenth or one-eighth part of the whole permanent income of the country, it cannot be regulated from hour to hour, from week to week. All plans relating to the public charge must be prepared and organised months before they are put into execution. The Estimates of 1858-9 were prepared by the Government of Lord Palmerston. I did not belong to that Government. I objected to many things that it did. What did the Conservative Government do when they came in? On the 11th of February, 1858, the Government of Lord Palmerston laid on the table Army Estimates amounting to £11,538,000. The charge for the Militia, £432,000, must be

added, making £11,970,000. That was shortly after the Liberal Government went out. When the Conservative Government came in I heard with great satisfaction the Budget of Mr. Disraeli. He proposed to reduce that sum of £11,970,000 to £11,750,000—a reduction of £200,000. Sudden reductions are too often questioned in cases of this kind. Public faith and honour must be kept, our soldiers must be paid, contracts must be fulfilled. Now, what was the end of the proposed reduction? The expenditure was increased to £12,512,000. Now, that's a matter of fact to which I invite your attention, and the attention of Mr. Cross, and the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There was a saving of £288,000 in the Naval Estimates of the year, but the Army expenditure exceeded the Estimates by more than £400,000 which we had to account for, and ask the House of Commons to vote in 1860. So far as regards the expenditure of 1858-9, the Estimates were in the main the Estimates of a Liberal Government. The Conservative Government, when they came into power, proposed somewhat to reduce them, but instead of doing so, we found they had increased them. So much for that year. Now comes, gentlemen, the year 1859-60, and in that year there was a great increase of expenditure which can hardly have escaped the memory of any of those who paid attention to such matters. In 1858-9 the expenditure had been £64,800,000; in 1859-60 the expenditure rose to £69,600,000—it rose, that is to say, by £4,800,000, and that, it is said, is the work of a Liberal Government. Now, I do not at all claim for the Liberal Government any exemption from this responsibility. They came into office, when?—At the end of the month of June, 1859. They proposed to Parliament the Estimates which they found made ready for them. The Estimates imposing the extension to £5,000,000 in the expenditure were the Estimates prepared by the Conservative Government, and not only that, they were Estimates of which a great deal of the money had been voted and actually spent, because the financial year of this country begins on the 1st of April, and it was not until the month of July that a Liberal Government had an opportunity of considering the state of the expenditure of the year. Now, I ask you whether it is not the height of hardihood or of ignorance for the adherents of a party who prepared those Estimates in the winter and in the course of the spring, and who spent a great deal of money, so that it was totally irrecoverable, to lay upon us the sole responsibility of the increase which then occurred in the public expenditure? Gentlemen, the augmentation was a very great augmentation, and it was followed by another augmentation in the year 1860, and of that also the responsibility is laid upon us by the opposite party. Now, listen to a plain tale and a short one. We came into office at the end of June, 1859. At the end of June, 1859, Lord Elgin arrived at the mouth of the Peiho in China to sign a treaty of peace with the Emperor of China, and, under the wise instructions of the Conservative Government, he went to sign this treaty of peace with a large fleet to help him to guide the pen. The Chinese did not understand the method of guiding a pen by a fleet, and thought that the Ambassador might do it himself. The consequence was they laid a sort of ambuscade for our fleet. A great disaster happened under the instructions of the Government of Lord Derby, and before we had been ten days or a fortnight in office we found—not that we found it when we had been ten days or a fortnight in office, but before we had been ten days or a

fortnight in office events had happened at the other side of the world which launched us in another war with China, under the instructions of the Government of Lord Derby, and that war cost us in the year 1860-61 at the very least from four to five millions of money. And now, in answer to an attack of mine in which I have carefully separated the cost of the Abyssinian war from the rest of the expenditure, those scribes who support this Government go back upon the Chinese war, due not to us, but to them, the fruit entirely of their policy and of their instructions, and put the charge which that war entailed before the country as a proof of our extravagance. Gentlemen, that, I think, is a proceeding which I certainly hope never to be guilty of, and I trust that no man in this room, however warm his feelings of partisanship may be, ever will allow himself so grossly to violate the rules of fairness and decency. And it is upon those statements, and statements like these, that those computations are made out and placarded in the country, sometimes in the letters which you see here, sometimes in letters a great deal larger, saying that at the Radicals forsooth—Lord Palmerston was a Radical!—that the Radicals have spent £5,000,000 in the year more than the Conservatives. Gentlemen, a very serious question in the minds of many is whether the expenditure of those years was warranted by the circumstances. I have not in the slightest degree shrunk from telling you that in 1859 we accepted the responsibility of proposing the estimates that had been prepared, and providing the money that had been spent in a considerable part by our predecessors in 1860. We had taken upon our shoulders the Chinese war which they had brought about by their policy. Now, gentlemen, this is a very serious question; but again, I go back to the point. It is impossible for an Administration to limit the expenditure if the country is set upon it. I believe I am disposed to go as far as most men in matters of thrift. But I am not disposed to say whether if I was Chancellor of the Exchequer I should think it my duty to set my individual will against the will of the whole country with regard to the question whether two or three millions more should be spent in a particular year. What you have a right to expect from a Government is this, that it shall sedulously strive to keep down the public expenditure, and that it shall never run in advance of the public feelings and of the public wants; but more than that I think you hardly can expect. But now, gentlemen, what was our case? I am now going to make a very serious and deliberate charge. I will tell you what our case was. It was this—that great as was the expenditure of 1859, great as was the expenditure of 1860 great as was the expenditure of 1861, it was only by the utmost efforts and the most desperate struggles that we kept down the expenditure where it stood, in consequence of the constant and persevering efforts of a large portion of the Opposition, and of many leaders of the Opposition, and of many men who are now Ministers of State, to compel us to spend more public money. Now, gentlemen, that is not a charge which a man ought to make without being able to support it. I will support it. I invite to it the attention of Mr. Cross, I invite to it the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I say deliberately that throughout the Government of Lord Palmerston large portions of the Opposition never desisted by its leaders in compelling the Government to spend more money. I say that, on the contrary, during the period of administration of Lord Derby and

Mr. Disraeli, instead of the Opposition endeavouring to stimulate the Government, in the matter of expenditure, we did the little we could to check them and control them in that course. Now, gentlemen, when you see and hear these statements about the economy of the Conservative Government as it is called—though I do not think it is Conservative myself—in former years, you would suppose they had done their best to restrain it, or at all events, that they had remained silent in the matter. You never would dream that they had endeavoured to force it to a point beyond which it actually reached. Now, there is a mode by which this matter may be brought to a statistic test. There are three ways in which opinions are promoted and forced forward in the House of Commons; the one is by division, and of course you will understand that those who divide in favour of a motion for expenditure help to press forward expenditure; another way is by motions, which have very often great influence even though they be not pressed to a division; and another way is found in a very harmless operation as it looks, but I may tell you it is sometimes a rather invidious act, that you may often have noticed reported in the newspapers. You will see before the solid business of the evening commences a number of gentlemen frequently get up in the House of Commons and ask this Minister and that Minister what he is going to do on a particular subject—“Mr. So-and-so to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will consent to increase the salaries of the Post-office sorters and letter-carriers in such-and-such a borough;” “Mr. So-and-so to call the attention of the House to the case of the Colonels of such-and-such regiments which have been placed in such-and-such a position of disadvantage;” “Mr. So-and-so to move for a committee on the pay of naval captains.” These are questions which are multiplied in an indefinite number of forms. Now, I say this—and the Government have the means of doing it if they like—let them reckon up throughout the Parliament of 1859-1865, all the questions which were put with a view of increasing the expenditure; let them reckon up all the motions that were made with the view of increasing expenditure, and let them reckon up all the divisions that were taken with a view of increasing the expenditure; let them see by whom those questions were put, by whom those motions were made, and who voted in those divisions. Now, that is a fair test—let Mr. Cross make that proposal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He would have nothing to do but to set a couple of clerks to work, and in three days they would do it. I do not say that we of the Liberal party are wholly exempt—from it; but the effect would be that you would find three-fourths, or perhaps nine-tenths, of those proceedings in endeavouring to force the Government into a higher expenditure proceeded from the Conservative party when sitting upon the benches of Opposition. And they may understand that I am not speaking without book. I will give you two particular instances. It so happens that they are instances in which the motion, I believe, was made by gentlemen who sat on the Liberal side of the House, but that is immaterial to my purpose. I want to test the disposition of the Conservative Government—that of kind of Government which you are asked to support, by returning to Parliament men who will support it. The year 1859, it seems, was a year in which the tender consciences of the supporters of the present Government were terribly scandalised on account of the

greatly increased expenditure. There was at that time a most formidable question afloat—a question connected with the proposal to create fortifications for the defence of the great arsenals of this country. We desired to appoint a commission to inquire into the necessity for these fortifications, and into the manner in which, if they were to be erected, they could be erected with the greatest advantage, and at the smallest cost. But the House of Commons were so fervent in their desire to have these fortifications, that they would not endure the delay entailed by a commission. They required that we should proceed at once. This motion was made on the 29th of July:—"That the expense of completing the necessary works of national defence should be met by a fund specially provided for that purpose." That meant by a public loan, and independent of the votes of Parliament. You see how the declaration of that act launched by the House of Commons—that it was ready to borrow money to any extent, would have tended to increase the expenditure. The Government resisted the motion, and it was defeated by 167 votes to 70, but in the minority which voted for the motion I see the names of six members of the present Government, who wanted at that very time, when the expenditure had been so much enlarged, to force us into a loan. The six members of the present Government who voted for the motion contained two members of the present Cabinet, Lord John Manners and Sir John Pakington, the latter of whom has been one of the gentlemen most connected with the spending departments of the country, and he has shown as liberal a disposition—if it be the true essence of Liberalism to tap the pockets of the tax-payers of this country—as any Minister I have ever known. But this was not only in relation to matters of war, it was shown in matters of peace also. Did you ever hear of the plan for erecting harbours of refuge? Perhaps not; because most of those harbours were to have been on the eastern side of the country. But there was such a plan, and it was proposed to spend, I think, in the first instance, £5,000,000 of money, of which two-thirds were to be at the cost of the Exchequer, and the other third was to be lent by the Exchequer. It was a scheme which could not have failed to cost £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 to the country. Now, what did Lord Palmerston do in those days of high expenditure? We set ourselves firmly against that scheme, and this motion was made in the House of Commons on the 19th of June, 1860:—"That, in the opinion of this House, it is the duty of her Majesty's Government to adopt at the earliest possible period the necessary measures to carry into effect the recommendations of the Commissioners appointed in 1858 to inquire into the formation of harbours of refuge on the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland." Observe the character of that motion. It was a motion that contemplated at the very outset the spending of several millions of public money, and the lending of some millions more; and, from what we know of the nature of that irresponsible expenditure, we may be certain that amount of five millions would have been doubled or trebled before it was over. Nine members of the present Government voted for the motion, but I will only give you the names of those who are in the present Cabinet, for they are entitled to that distinction. There were three who are now Cabinet Ministers who voted for that motion—Lord Stanley, our friend Sir John Pakington, and the present guardian of the public finances, Mr. Ward Hunt. They voted for an address in

the House of Commons to compel the Government to spend this money, but the Government did one of the greatest things on behalf of public economy that I have ever known done. The motion was made, as I have told you, and I regret to say it was carried by 145 to 128, so that the House of Commons addressed the Crown to have harbours of refuge made, but the Government of Lord Palmerston, to his great credit, refused to act upon that address of the House of Commons. There is another portion of this question to which I must briefly allude, reserving my right to go into it more fully on some other occasion. Still, I may say a few words on the present occasion; but I have, as it were, archaeologically and in an antiquarian spirit, to relate the acts of former Governments simply for this reason—that our opponents have not been able to say anything on the present issue, but have been obliged to disinter and dismember questions which in all practical reality are bygones. Now, I come back to the charge, and I repeat it, that the Government has added to the present permanent expenditure of the country a sum of three millions, without taking into account one farthing for the money expended for the Abyssinian war. Now, I must say a word on this subject of the expenditure on the Abyssinian war. I believe the estimate was that it would cost £5,000,000. That was made in the month of April or May, when the war was practically at a close, and the whole expenditure ought to have been accurately known if there had been no gross blundering or negligence. I can only hope that the Government has told us the whole truth, and that we know the real estimate of the expenditure of that war. But I am told that we shall have another bill to pay. I will not treat as a fact that which I do not know to be a fact; but if it be the truth the present Government has incurred a most enormous and a most serious responsibility. But the three millions are supposed to be divided as follows:—£1,400,000 for the army, £600,000 for the navy, and £1,000,000 for the civil service. You will soon have most ingenious efforts to draw away the attention of the public from the real question by seeking to show that the public services of the country are inefficient—that is, the naval and military services are in an inefficient state, and that money must be spent to make them efficient. There is nothing that you ought to be more upon your guard against than the alleged inefficiency of the public service. It is in itself a good plea, but in the mouth of a Government which wants to find an excuse for a great increase of the public expenditure, it is a plea not to be admitted without a great deal of careful scrutiny. I will tell you the result of some of my experience. When the Government wishes to raise money it is invariably done by saying that the public service is inefficient, that the money is spent; and the next thing declared is that the public service has at last been made efficient. It would be well if this ended here. But somebody else comes in, who declares the public service again inefficient, and the money is again spent. The same process goes on time after time, the public is utterly bewildered, and at last arrives at the only certainty in the whole matter—a large augmentation of the public charges. I have heard that the troops have been badly armed for the last five years; that the late Government did not finish the contracts for iron-plated ships, improved artillery, and small arms. The late Government, feeling that a vast expenditure had been uselessly incurred for iron-plated ships and improved arms, the last pattern being superseded by something superior before it was

even serv'd out, determined to proceed cautiously, and not rashly, to incur a vast expenditure, as the present Government have done on the latest new invention. The lesson we taught was to proceed with moderation. Some have heard a great deal said about the addition of £500,000 to the public charges, in order to give an additional 2d. a day to the pay of the soldier. Gentlemen, I do not say that too much has been done. On the contrary, I am by no means of that opinion, but I do mean to say that all that has been done might have been done at much less cost to the country. But what is the defence urged by the Government? They say that we ought to object;—but when the Executive Government of the Crown proposed an increase of pay to the army, it was impossible for any Opposition to step in and say no. No one who considers in the slightest degree the relation between the Executive Government and the army, and the right which the army has to rely on the promises and determination of the Executive, will fail to see that the judgment of the Executive Government was perfectly conclusive when such a proposal was made, and as they were entitled to its merits, so, in consequence, they must bear its responsibility. Let me give you another instance—they built a number of ships, and they said that what were called reliefs, and were intended to take the place o' other vessels on distant stations, were in an unsatisfactory and inefficient state, and that it was necessary to put the country to a great charge to build more of them. We endeavoured to stop this measure in the House of Commons and failed. We could not bring the House of Commons to see the folly of this policy. If you are to have a real retrenchment in your Navy Estimates you must have it by a great modification of that antiquated system of keeping fleets all over the world, by means of these reliefs, as they are called, or by a multitude of wooden ships, which would be almost entirely useless for the defence of the country. Therefore I at once say that the money had better, perhaps, have been thrown into the sea; but for the expenditure of it I hold no one responsible but the Government. It is quite true that the House of Commons declined to stop the Government in its career, but the House of Commons is a body which had during last Session particularly, and during the Session before, the greatest difficulties to contend with in dealing with the Government. It has been compelled to meet the Government at every turn for the purpose of changing its bad proposals into good ones. But you must not expect too much from the House of Commons. This is, I think, all I need state to you with regard to these subjects, except that I will sum it up in one sentence, and I will tell you this. You observe there is a million in civil expenditure that has been added. Now, I know very well that the case set up by the adherents of the Government will be that there were new wants that required to be met. Who supposes that in a country which expends £65,000,000 every year—it is now, I am sorry to say, beyond £70,000,000—who supposes that you can estimate down to every farthing of your expenditure? You cannot stereotype the wants of a great empire. New wants are always coming forward, but where there are new wants, and provision is made for them, that provision ought to be counterbalanced by new economies. What has been done by the present Government? I affirm this, that they have adopted with regard to the civil expenditure a system to which was once applied in a different sense a phrase which is

a very expressive one—a system of making things pleasant all round. How do you understand that? You understand that everywhere there are demands on the public purse, and a great deal of trouble and unpopularity to be escaped, and a great deal of political influence to be obtained in local towns by making things pleasant all round. I affirm this, that before the Government had been in office one month it commenced its career of granting requests which we had refused, of undoing and reversing decisions to which we had come in the interests of the public purse, and of substituting for them other decisions, at an increase of the public charge. I will give you but one instance of the way in which this works. I read it in the address of a candidate—I will not say where; but there is no doubt about the facts, for they are a matter of public notoriety. The Government had advanced £20,000 for the purpose of carrying out a public work at the time of this election. A candidate comes forward in the interests of the Government, and he states that in the time of the Government of Earl Russell or Lord Palmerston—I forget which—he proposed that the State should surrender that debt of £20,000 upon receiving the sum of £2,500. That proposal, he said, was opposed by the Liberal Government, and he could not carry it; but when a Conservative Government came in, they agreed to it. That, I think, is an instance of making all things pleasant. The candidate pleads the sacrifice which the Government had made of public money as a reason why the constituency should return him to Parliament. If you meditate upon this little matter, I think you will find it full of useful information, and it may convince you that it arises out of a system of a very liberal administration of the public funds and a contempt of small, niggardly and unworthy saving.

There is another question which cannot be overlooked—I mean the question of the Irish Church. I endeavoured on a former occasion at St. Helen's to express this opinion, which I am confident is founded on fact, that the question respecting the Irish Church as it stood during the last Session was really, whether in Ireland you would adopt our proposal and our policy under the circumstances of the country, and have no Church Establishment, or whether you would have three or four. It was necessary to point out that those who were responsible for the government of Ireland agreed with us in the opinion that we could not stand as we were, and they have proposed a plan, against which we have proposed ours. Many of you probably, and a considerable number of the people who are Protestant, feel opposed in conscience to the payment of the grant to Maynooth College, and many who are Roman Catholics may feel not less aggrieved at the payment of the sum of £40,000 to the Presbyterians under the name of *Regium Donum*. What is the meaning of these two grants? They are the buttresses of the Irish National Church. The Irish Church is such a contradiction of all the principles on which Church Establishments ever have been founded and recommended, and of all the feelings of the country, and I may say of the common sense of men and the judgment of the civilised world, that it is impossible to get it tolerated except upon conditions, and therefore the policy of those who desire its continuance has been to maintain and to multiply these grants which I have called the buttresses of the Irish Church; but it was felt that Maynooth and the *Regium Donum* were

even served out, determined to proceed cautiously, and not rashly, to incur a vast expenditure, as the present Government have done on the latest new invention. The lesson we taught was to proceed with moderation. Some have heard a great deal said about the addition of £500,000 to the public charges, in order to give an additional 2d. a day to the pay of the soldier. Gentlemen, I do not say that too much has been done. On the contrary, I am by no means of that opinion, but I do mean to say that all that has been done might have been done at much less cost to the country. But what is the defence urged by the Government? They say that we ought to object;—but when the Executive Government of the Crown proposed an increase of pay to the army, it was impossible for any Opposition to step in and say no. No one who considers in the slightest degree the relation between the Executive Government and the army, and the right which the army has to rely on the promises and determination of the Executive, will fail to see that the judgment of the Executive Government was perfectly conclusive when such a proposal was made, and as they were entitled to its merits, so, in consequence, they must bear its responsibility. Let me give you another instance—they built a number of ships, and they said that what were called reliefs, and were intended to take the place of other vessels on distant stations, were in an unsatisfactory and inefficient state, and that it was necessary to put the country to a great charge to build more of them. We endeavoured to stop this measure in the House of Commons and failed. We could not bring the House of Commons to see the folly of this policy. If you are to have a real retrenchment in your Navy Estimates you must have it by a great modification of that antiquated system of keeping fleets all over the world, by means of these reliefs, as they are called, or by a multitude of wooden ships, which would be almost entirely useless for the defence of the country. Therefore I at once say that the money had better, perhaps, have been thrown into the sea; but for the expenditure of it I hold no one responsible but the Government. It is quite true that the House of Commons declined to stop the Government in its career, but the House of Commons is a body which had during last Session particularly, and during the Session before, the greatest difficulties to contend with in dealing with the Government. It has been compelled to meet the Government at every turn for the purpose of changing its bad proposals into good ones. But you must not expect too much from the House of Commons. This is, I think, all I need state to you with regard to these subjects, except that I will sum it up in one sentence, and I will tell you this. You observe there is a million in civil expenditure that has been added. Now, I know very well that the case set up by the adherents of the Government will be that there were new wants that required to be met. Who supposes that in a country which expends £65,000,000 every year—it is now, I am sorry to say, beyond £70,000,000—who supposes that you can estimate down to every farthing of your expenditure? You cannot stereotype the wants of a great empire. New wants are always coming forward, but where there are new wants, and provision is made for them, that provision ought to be counterbalanced by new economies. What has been done by the present Government? I affirm this, that they have adopted with regard to the civil expenditure a system to which was once applied in a different sense a phrase which is

a very expressive one—a system of making things pleasant all round. How do you understand that? You understand that everywhere there are demands on the public purse, and a great deal of trouble and unpopularity to be escaped, and a great deal of political influence to be obtained in local towns by making things pleasant all round. I affirm this, that before the Government had been in office one month it commenced its career of granting requests which we had refused, of undoing and reversing decisions to which we had come in the interests of the public purse, and of substituting for them other decisions, at an increase of the public charge. I will give you but one instance of the way in which this works. I read it in the address of a candidate—I will not say where; but there is no doubt about the facts, for they are a matter of public notoriety. The Government had advanced £20,000 for the purpose of carrying out a public work at the time of this election. A candidate comes forward in the interests of the Government, and he states that in the time of the Government of Earl Russell or Lord Palmerston—I forget which—he proposed that the State should surrender that debt of £20,000 upon receiving the sum of £2,500. That proposal, he said, was opposed by the Liberal Government, and he could not carry it; but when a Conservative Government came in, they agreed to it. That, I think, is an instance of making all things pleasant. The candidate pleads the sacrifice which the Government had made of public money as a reason why the constituency should return him to Parliament. If you meditate upon this little matter, I think you will find it full of useful information, and it may convince you that it arises out of a system of a very liberal administration of the public funds and a contempt of small, niggardly and unworthy saving.

There is another question which cannot be overlooked—I mean the question of the Irish Church. I endeavoured on a former occasion at St. Helen's to express this opinion, which I am confident is founded on fact, that the question respecting the Irish Church as it stood during the last Session was really, whether in Ireland you would adopt our proposal and our policy under the circumstances of the country, and have no Church Establishment, or whether you would have three or four. It was necessary to point out that those who were responsible for the government of Ireland agreed with us in the opinion that we could not stand as we were, and they have proposed a plan, against which we have proposed ours. Many of you probably, and a considerable number of the people who are Protestant, feel opposed in conscience to the payment of the grant to Maynooth College, and many who are Roman Catholics may feel not less aggrieved at the payment of the sum of £40,000 to the Presbyterians under the name of *Regium Donum*. What is the meaning of these two grants? They are the buttresses of the Irish National Church. The Irish Church is such contradiction of all the principles on which Church Establishments ever have been founded and recommended, and of all the feelings of the country, and I may say of the common sense of men and the judgment of the civilised world, that it is impossible to get it tolerated except upon conditions, and therefore the policy of those who desire its continuance has been to maintain and to multiply these grants which I have called the buttresses of the Irish Church; but it was felt that Maynooth and the *Regium Donum* were

not enough, and that there must be some more of those buttresses, for the wall was weak, and was beginning to bulge horribly outwards, so that there was a fear that it would fall. Therefore a new buttress was devised in the shape of a foundation of a Roman Catholic University, and a second one — viz., the increase of the *Regium Donum*. In the House of Commons I read a letter, written by the authority of Lord Derby in the year 1867, with respect to the increase of the *Regium Donum*, in which he said that he was extremely sorry it was too late to do anything that year, but when the Estimates for the next year were framed the matter would be considered, which is understood to mean that the prayer would be granted. I read that letter in the House of Commons. The First Minister of the Crown, the present Prime Minister, said that he was not in any manner bound by what was done by the Government of Lord Derby. I thought that rather odd considering that he was not merely a member of Lord Derby's Government, but that he was the leader of the House of Commons, and I thought it still more odd when I read the address in the newspapers the other day, in which I saw that the present Prime Minister has been upon terms of brotherly kindness with Lord Derby for the last 20 years; they had had but one common soul and spirit—one thought and mind in public affairs. And so it appears that there are two faces to this deity, which may be turned about alternately as occasion serves. When Lord Derby has made an inconvenient declaration, then, indeed, we had nothing to do with the Government of Lord Derby; but when there is no inconvenient declaration in the case, and when it is known that the name of Lord Derby—of which from many points of view I can speak with cordial respect—when it is known that the name of Lord Derby is by far the best name that can be presented to the country at the approach of a general election, then, indeed, a complete amalgamation with Lord Derby appears to be effected, and you are invoked in his name to support the present Government. But, gentlemen, whether it be Lord Derby, or Mr. Disraeli, or Lord Anyone-else or Mr. Anybody-else, that is not the question in view. The question in view in this—are we, these three kingdoms of her Majesty, to be one united kingdom, or are we not? You have been united with Ireland, so far as law could unite you and so far as force and the strong hand of military power could unite you—you have been united, if you call it united, for 700 years. The union that has subsisted between you has at no period been a source of strength or security to this country, but has at all periods been a source of wonder and of scandal to the civilised world. Now, gentlemen, you are the persons to whom it is to be referred in the last resort how long these matters are to be carried on. Do you intend, or do you not intend, that our relations with Ireland shall continue such as they have been? I ask you, the people of England, be you Conservatives, be you Liberals, be you Radicals, or what you like—do you think it is honourable to you, as civilised people or as a Christian people that your relations towards Ireland shall continue in this state? It is the strong hand of civil authority and of armed force and not the love or respect for the law or for the British connection that preserves the peace of Ireland. This is the question you have to answer, and this is the question for a reply to which you will be responsible. We have fairly raised it and laid it before you. You might, in other times, have laid it in a great degree upon the governing classes of the country; you might have laid it

on the Houses of Parliament, but you can do so no longer; you are about to create that House of Parliament, the judgment of which will be all-powerful with respect to the settlement of this great question. The next few weeks must determine whether for years to come the present state of things is or is not to continue. What is the policy opposed to ours? I should like to know that. I should like to know if there is a man out of this room who could answer that question? We have a right to look for the answer in the address of the Prime Minister. If we have had for months and months past one topic more than another reiterated beyond all endurance it is that my conduct and the conduct of others has been mischievous beyond measure because of our rabid desire for office. We rushed at the Irish Church without waiting for the report of the Commissioners. "Why did you not wait for the report of the Commission?" we have been asked—"for the report of the ten wise men who were to settle all these difficulties?" Well, gentlemen, I was content to say that in my opinion the report of the Commission could not possibly have anything to do with the matter. The report of the Commission was a report to consider how the Irish Establishment should be managed supposing it were to continue an Establishment, but as I wished that it should not continue an Establishment, I very naturally wished not to give the Commissioners the trouble of making any report at all. It is perfectly obvious that as far as the report of the Commission is concerned it could have no value. But how does the matter stand on the other side? That is a very different affair. They did wait for it, and the report has been published. Yet what is the result? The Prime Minister publishes his address, which contains an outline of the policy on which the three kingdoms are to be governed, and there is not a single reference in his address to that report. He did not even acknowledge the portentous labours by which the Commissioners have contrived to produce a huge mass of figures in a great blue book. As a matter of policy, that argument of waiting for the report of the Commission, in order that the Government might be able to form some idea of what was required on the question of the Irish Church, is now utterly exploded. I have said, and I am bold and free to repeat, that I am not a reformer of the Irish Church, but an anti-reformer. There is no use in reforming the Irish Church. In the Irish Church you have a body which, as regards the character of its bishops, its clergy, and its laity, deserves and has my cordial respect. I do not want to extinguish a single Irish bishop, but I object to their living on other people, and I am perfectly convinced that as an ecclesiastical body, as a holy Church, a religious communion, and as a spiritual body, when you have once by your votes put them through the process of disestablishment they will be happier, better, and more useful, and live more nobly than they ever did before. As to the charge of being a promoter of the interests of the Roman Catholic Church, I do not wish to use an argument that may be odious; but I repel and repudiate that charge, and I repeat that those who make it are not prepared to substantiate it. I distinctly deny that our proposal was made in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church, for, while I admit that the Roman Catholics refuse to take what we offer, it gives to the Roman Catholic people of Ireland civil justice. What is the gift of civil justice? It is made rather to promote the interests of Christianity and to spread the dominion of the Protestant

Church. If you say that it is not so you admit that the Roman Church is the only true Church; and I must say that it does the Roman Catholic Church some credit when I consider their readiness and determination to rely on their ancient and unbroken traditions, on the zeal and perseverance of their subordinates. That is to say, their choice is not to have an Establishment. They say, "We can support our own Church," and they tell the Protestant Establishment that it must come down from its vantage-ground and meet the challenge of its rivals. That—it is replied—will be the ruin and destruction of the Protestant Church. And this, gentlemen, is said by the friends of Protestantism! Well, I suppose that if there be any friends of Protestantism that are worth its having they are those who are inspired by some belief in its truth, and if there be any men that have any belief in its truth, I think their desire will be that the Church of Rome, and the Church of England, and the Church of the Presbyterians, and every other Church under the circumstances in which Ireland is placed should meet on a fair and level field, and free from the odious recollections and the painful associations that must attend every system where the one party has necessarily hanging about it the sense and the spirit of ascendancy, and where the other carries with it all the recollections of wounded feelings resulting from oppression that lasted for long ages. Gentlemen, the question is a great issue for you to consider and to decide. I think that we have done our duty in the endeavour to lay it before you. Its gravity is not to be disguised. It is said that we, forsooth, have made it a party question. Well, gentlemen, at all events you know this, that when we charged ourselves with the question of Reform, and when we found that we must abandon the question of Reform or our offices, we determined to abandon our offices. After that we are not to be driven back by these idle imputations. We have made our appeal fairly, openly, in the face of day to the people of England to abolish the Church of Ireland as an Establishment, with every consideration that equity can give in the arrangement of the measures necessary for the execution of our designs, to abolish along with it every charter grant that involves the State in the responsibility of connection with any particular religion, and to establish no other Church and no other form of religious teaching in its place, after we shall have done all that equity and indulgence can require in winding up this great scheme of policy. That, I say, is the design that we have laid before the country, and which the country does understand. There is no other scheme, gentlemen, before you; there is nothing but a multitude of misty, foggy, vaporous declarations, as far as they have meaning, all in conflict. One says he is for holding high the Protestant religion in Ireland; another says, "Undoubtedly the question of the Church of Ireland is difficult and requires much consideration;" another says, "Probably it will be necessary to give away some part of its property." Gentlemen, don't follow any one of these narrow, obscure, and devious paths, that will lead you into the desert, into the mists, and into the fog. Let us go straightforward on the road of civil justice and equal rights; giving unto others that which we desire they should give to us, doing unto them as we, in their place, would be done by, and confident that in serving the right we are serving the God of right and justice, and that wherever be the truth of faith and religion, wherever be the superior claims of this or that ecclesiastical communion, the supreme interests of truth will and must be served by the adoption of such a policy.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN THE

A M P H I T H E A T R E, L I V E R P O O L.

OCTOBER 14TH, 1868.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I hope I do not presume too much when I express my belief that my friend Mr. Grenfell has done much to-night within these walls to establish his title to your favour. In one respect, if in one only, I am happier than he, and that is that I am enabled to look back to former occasions on which I have had the honour to address you, and to be cheered by your approval in the conduct of questions of great public interest and moment. Mr. Grenfell has, indeed, given me a friendly challenge to enter to-night on the subject of retrenchment; but as I hold that mercy is a part of justice, and as I remember that it was my duty to inflict a long explanation on that matter only 48 hours ago upon a portion of this constituency, I do feel that it is but fair that a certain time of repose should be allowed to the minds of the men of Lancashire. There is no want of topics upon which it is to be desired, and, indeed, it is urgently necessary, that there should be a free interchange of ideas between yourselves and those who are the candidates for your suffrages. I cannot but go back, addressing you as I now do, towards the close of the existence of this Parliament—I cannot but go back to an occasion, two years ago, when we were engaged in the struggle for the Reform Bill of 1866. My friend Mr. Grenfell has told you that he was not one of the most sanguine adherents of that Reform Bill, but he significantly added that he voted for it on every occasion. Now, I think that we have not much to complain of, and certainly I, for one, don't complain at all of those who might have thought that we were premature in raising the question, or who might have thought that when we did raise it we did not take the right path to success, provided they did that which was done by my hon. friend,—namely, that when he saw the public interest

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

18

SPEECHES OF THE RIGHT HON. W. E. GLADSTONE.

Church. If you say that it is not so you admit that the Roman Church is the only true Church; and I must say that it does the Roman Catholic Church some credit when I consider their readiness and determination to rely on their ancient and unbroken traditions, on the zeal and perseverance of their subordinates. That is to say, their choice is not to have an Establishment. They say, "We can support our own Church," and they tell the Protestant Establishment that it must come down from its vantage-ground and meet the challenge of its rivals. That—it is replied—will be the ruin and destruction of the Protestant Church. And this, gentlemen, is said by the friends of Protestantism! Well, I suppose that if there be any friends of Protestantism that are worth its having they are those who are inspired by some belief in its truth, and if there be any men that have any belief in its truth, I think their desire will be that the Church of Rome, and the Church of England, and the Church of the Presbyterians, and every other Church under the circumstances in which Ireland is placed should meet on a fair and level field, and free from the odious recollections and the painful associations that must attend every system where the one party has necessarily hanging about it the sense and the spirit of ascendancy, and where the other carries with it all the recollections of wounded feelings resulting from oppression that lasted for long ages. Gentlemen, the question is a great issue for you to consider and to decide. I think that we have done our duty in the endeavour to lay it before you. Its gravity is not to be disguised. It is said that we, forsooth, have made it a party question. Well, gentlemen, at all events you know this, that when we charged ourselves with the question of Reform, and when we found that we must abandon the question of Reform or our offices, we determined to abandon our offices. After that we are not to be driven back by these idle imputations. We have made our appeal fairly, openly, in the face of day to the people of England to abolish the Church of Ireland as an Establishment, with every consideration that equity can give in the arrangement of the measures necessary for the execution of our designs, to abolish along with it every other grant that involves the State in the responsibility of connection with any particular religion, and to establish no other Church and no other form of religious teaching in its place, after we shall have done all that equity and indulgence can require in winding up this great scheme of policy. That, I say, is the design that we have laid before the country, and which the country does understand. There is no other scheme, gentlemen, before you; there is nothing but a multitude of misty, foggy, vaporous declarations, as far as they have meaning, all in conflict. One says he is for holding high the Protestant religion in Ireland; another says, "Undoubtedly the question of the Church of Ireland is difficult and requires much consideration;" another says, "Probably it will be necessary to give away some part of its property." Gentlemen, don't follow any one of these narrow, obscure, and devious paths, that will lead you into the desert, into the mists, and into the fog. Let us go straightforward on the road of civil justice and equal rights; giving unto others that which we desire they should give to us, doing unto them as we, in their place, would be done by, and confident that in serving the right we are serving the God of right and justice, and that wherever be the truth of faith and religion, wherever be the superior claims of this or that ecclesiastical communion, the supreme interests of truth will and must be served by the adoption of such a policy.

S P E C H

DELIVERED IN THE
AMPHITHEATRE, LIVERPOOL.

OCTOBER 14TH, 1868.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN.—I hope I do not presume too much when I express my belief that my friend Mr. Grenfell has done much to-night within these walls to establish his title to your favour. In one respect, if in one only, I am happier than he, and that is that I am enabled to look back to former occasions on which I have had the honour to address you, and to be cheered by your approval in the conduct of questions of great public interest and moment. Mr. Grenfell has, indeed, given me a friendly challenge to enter to-night on the subject of retrenchment; but as I hold that mercy is a part of justice, and as I remember that it was my duty to inflict a long explanation on that matter only 48 hours ago upon a portion of this constituency, I do feel that it is but fair that a certain time of repose should be allowed to the minds of the men of Lancashire. There is no want of topics upon which it is to be desired, and, indeed, it is urgently necessary, that there should be a free interchange of ideas between yourselves and those who are the candidates for your suffrages. I cannot but go back, addressing you as I now do, towards the close of the existence of this Parliament—I cannot but go back to an occasion, two years ago, when we were engaged in the struggle for the Reform Bill of 1866. My friend Mr. Grenfell has told you that he was not one of the most sanguine adherents of that Reform Bill, but he significantly added that he voted for it on every occasion. Now, I think that we have not much to complain of, and certainly I, for one, don't complain at all of those who might have thought that we were premature in raising the question, or who might have thought that when we did raise it we did not take the right path to success, provided they did that which was done by my hon. friend,—namely, that when he saw the public interest

was involved, and that the principles of Liberal Government must either enjoy a triumph or suffer defeat, he lent the aid of his vote on every occasion in order to insure that triumph and avert that defeat. In the month of April, 1866—repeating a sentiment which had been uttered by my noble friend, Earl Russell, who was at the head of the Government—repeating the sentiment, although in other words, I told you—using a phrase which was much ridiculed at the time—that we had broken our bridges and had burnt our boats, and that, come what might, we held ourselves bound in faith and honour to the people, and would not recede from the ground which we had taken. Gentlemen, I hope you think that that pledge was honourably fulfilled. I trust you may also be of opinion that the men who gave those pledges when they give others, and make solemn declarations upon other subjects, do it, not for the purpose of paltering with your feelings and serving their own interest, but because they have great public objects in view, because they require your aid to enable them to compass those objects, and because, in order to obtain your aid, they know it is necessary to possess your confidence. Now, upon the subject of Reform it is necessary that we should travel a little backwards, for, unhappily, that question, although it has reached a position which undoubtedly involves a great popular triumph, is not, I am afraid, to be regarded as one of which we have completely taken leave. In 1867 we were introduced to a series of extraordinary scenes. First of all we had a general intimation and promise that something would be done; then a series of resolutions, which strutted a brief hour upon the stage—as they might do on this stage and then disappear; then there was a Bill which we have been told, on the authority of a Cabinet Minister, was framed in ten minutes, and which was withdrawn in very little more than ten minutes; and, lastly, there was a Bill which—undergoing the strangest transformations in its course through Parliament—has now, I will not say, become the law of the land, but has been altered into something like that which has become the law of the land. When that Bill was introduced I frankly stated my opinion that it was the worst Bill that was ever laid upon the table of this House of Commons; and, moreover, I believed then, and I believe now, and I will give you the means of judging whether I am reasonable in that sentiment, that it was a Bill the very presenting of which would have deserved a justified a vote of censure from Parliament. For what did that Bill contain? Under the name of a measure of progress, it was a measure of reaction; under the name of a measure for enlarging the political influence of those great classes who were almost excluded from the representation, it actually narrowed and lowered the influence of those classes. I have no doubt that what I now say appears like a revival of ancient and forgotten history, so rapidly were the features of that measure one by one effaced, and so anxious were its authors that the recollection of them should not be revived. But what was the aspect with which that Bill was presented to us? It contained a provision which would have enfranchised by an enlargement of the suffrage under the name of household suffrage from 100,000 to 120,000 men of the classes inhabiting houses below £10 in value. That was the enlargement which it contained. But, along with that, it contained a provision under the name of the dual vote which would have doubled in the middle and the wealthier classes of this country so ne 300,000; so that instead of receiving from that measure, if

it had passed as it stood, the benefit of an enlarged share of influence in the representation, the labouring men of the country, including those men of Lancashire who had proved alike their intelligence and their heroism during the terrible period of the cotton famine, would have found themselves condemned to a still narrower sphere in the influence they could exercise upon the representation of the country than the sphere afforded them by the confessedly defective provisions of the Reform Act of 1832. Therefore, that measure, called a measure of Reform, was really a measure of retrogression and reaction, and, although called a measure for conferring popular privileges, it was really a measure for diminishing the popular privileges already conferred. And permit me to say that if we are to estimate the judgment of the Government, if we are to estimate the intentions and principles of the Government, we must estimate them not by the final form of an Act of Parliament, which exhibits all the influences that the various sections of Parliament may really have brought to bear upon it during its discussion, we must estimate them mainly from the form of the Bill when it was laid upon the table. The simple facts I have given will enable you, the electors of this large county constituency, and the electors of the borough of Liverpool, to judge how far it is true and how far it is not that Her Majesty's present advisers did address themselves to the question of Reform with the honest intention of enlarging the sphere of popular influence and of representation. But, gentlemen, over and above what I have said, there were other provisions in the Reform Bill almost as blameworthy as the provisions relating to the dual vote, and these were the provisions which make me now feel it necessary to address you for some little time upon the subject, because they involve matters that must, necessarily, come under the early attention of the Parliament about to be chosen. I mean now the provisions relating to compound householders. There was a fashion adopted by members of the Government of sneering at what was termed the compound householder, as if the compound householder was other than a British citizen fulfilling all his duties of citizenship; nay, more, in utter forgetfulness that the compound householder generally was not a compound householder by his own choice, but by arrangement between his landlord and his own parish. And these compound householders were two-thirds of the whole population below the £10 line. The Bill presented to Parliament excluded the whole of those compound householders, but it allowed to them the power of—what do you think? (A voice: Paying their own rates.) Paying the rates! says my friend. And what does that mean to a man who never heard of rates, whose landlords had paid the rates and been reimbursed in the rent without the occupant's knowing anything about the matter? Why, you know, there were tens of thousands even in this town, and hundreds of thousands of such throughout the country. Now, what was the option, what was the privilege conceded to the artisan of England in that condition? It was this: he might go to the most learned in the law among his friends and inquire of them what course he was to take in order to find out the nature and amount of his liability as a rate-payer; he must then find out—and I am sure I do not know exactly how he would do it—what rates had been paid recently in the parish to which he belonged, of which he had no business, as the law stood, to know anything at all. And then he was allowed the privilege of devising a form under which

he might apply to the parish officer to pay up the full difference between the rate last levied on the parish and the composition rates which his landlord had paid for him, and of which he knew nothing whatever. Gentlemen, it was a pure mockery. It was little short of an insult to the labouring men of England, engaged from morning to night in the honourable exertions whereby they support their wives and families, to tell them that if they wished to enjoy the privileges of citizenship they were to set about the process of this legal inquiry—to ascertain facts and learn the forms in which to present the documents, and then to pay a sum in hard money in order to be educated to the franchise. Well, on the night on which that proposal was made I said that it was a Bill for imposing upon the people of England—that is upon two-thirds of the people of England—below £10 a pecuniary fine, as the condition for obtaining and exercising the franchise, and to that statement I now deliberately adhere. The Liberal party in the House of Commons were accordingly dissatisfied with the provisions of the Bill, and they authorised and instructed me at a meeting which was held at my house for the purpose, to state the formidable objections, as we considered them, to the Bill. I will run over those objections. The first was that while the voter of £10 was to reside for one year to entitle him to the franchise, the voter under £10 was to reside for two years to entitle him to the franchise, and the Minister who explained that clause, Sir John Pakington, the present Minister of War, very frankly stated in the House of Commons that the main object of creating that distinction and imposing the condition of two years—indeed, of one—was to restrain the numbers that would be admitted to the franchise. Well, gentlemen, that clause disappeared, and the two years, through the action of the Liberal party upon a division, were reduced to one year. The second point was the dual vote, in which I have already told you that it was estimated by the best-informed persons that while it would have been enjoyed exclusively by those wealthier portions of the community that were already amply represented, to them would be given an influence of not less than 300,000 additional votes. The statement of the Minister was that it would very largely exceed 200,000, but I know I do not speak without book when I place that amount at 300,000. Well, gentlemen, that clause also disappeared. The next was a set of franchises given to persons who had obtained degrees in Universities, given to persons who paid a certain amount of assessed taxes, or who paid a certain amount of income-tax, all invested with the same apparatus—viz., that of depressing popular influence in the constituencies. Those clauses were powerfully opposed by my learned friend Sir Roundell Palmer, and the Government was compelled to withdraw them. The next point, gentlemen—the fourth of those I have named—was that the Bill did not contain what is known by the name of a lodger franchise. Now, possibly in Liverpool—certainly in many towns of the country—as a general rule, each head of a family has his own house, and where that is the case the question of the lodger franchise is of little importance; but in large portions of London—and London, you will recollect, contains one-third of the entire town population of the country—in large portions of London, by far the greater part of the artisans and labouring population are not householders but lodgers; therefore we entirely objected to passing by this well-qualified class of citizens; and the Liberal party required, and at length obtained, the

insertion of the clause which grants the lodger franchise. Well, gentlemen, the fifth point I will mention is this—there was an ingenious provision in the Bill that any voter might give his vote by means of a form written upon paper; it was represented that this would be a matter of great convenience, and one distinguished member of Parliament—very friendly indeed to the proposal, a man of whom I never can speak but to his honour—described the proposal in this sense:—The declaration upon paper was to be made, I think, before a magistrate, and he said it would be exceedingly convenient if it would turn the magistrate's drawing-room or sitting-room into the polling-booth. Well, gentlemen, we did not think that a great recommendation. It appeared to us that we—especially those of us who object to the ballot—most undoubtedly wish rather to see the British citizen give his vote with his fellow-citizens at the polling-booth than carry it to the house of the magistrate, very possibly the magistrate being his landlord, very possibly under the conduct of the landlord's agent on his way to the drawing-room. We deemed the provision adverse to free election and a popular franchise, and upon a division we were able to expunge it from the Bill. The sixth point upon which we objected was that the county occupation vote was not sufficiently extended; it was proposed to fix the line at £15 of rated value. We did not obtain with respect to that point as much as we could have wished. However, we obtained the reduction to £12 rated value, and, undoubtedly, I hope that any voter who happens to be of £12 rated value in the county, and not to be of £15, and happens to hear any Tory candidate dilating on the great generosity of her Majesty's Government in granting you this Reform Bill, will inquire into the history of the party operation by which the £12 got a vote in the teeth of the views of her Majesty's Government. The seventh point related to the scheme of the redistribution of seats, and upon that I will only say that, as it was introduced, it was miserable, narrow, and totally unsatisfactory. By force of adverse divisions and considerable majorities, we did obtain some enlargement of that scheme. I own we did not obtain all the enlargement that we should have wished; that was not our fault; it was the fault of the resistance with which we were met from the Treasury benches. My eighth point was this—that the Bill, as it was introduced, did not grant any reduction whatever upon the leasehold franchise in the county constituencies. We deemed that it was most desirable to increase that class of voters, and again upon a division we were enabled to obtain the reduction of that franchise from £10 to £5, at which it now stands. These are eight of the ten points I mentioned which I put down to-day; the ninth I really don't at this moment recollect; but the tenth related to the personal payment of rates, on which I shall say a few more words. But I am bound also to add, for I think they are among the very valuable provisions of the Reform Bill, that we were enabled to introduce into that measure not, indeed, all the clauses that are desirable for the purpose of restraining the heavy cost of Parliamentary elections, which cost, depend upon it, gentlemen, is neither more nor less, when you look at it closely, than another fine upon the exercise of popular privilege, another limitation placed upon the freedom of your choice—we did not succeed in introducing all that we sought to introduce for the purpose of limiting that heavy charge. Some provisions applicable to the whole country, and some, in particular, applicable to boroughs, we

did introduce, which as far as they go are of a very salutary and useful character, but which, unfortunately, did not receive the approval of her Majesty's Government, and were carried by that last and painful resort, the resort to the process of counting numbers on a division. There is another point I must mention, although it relates in this county more to towns than to the county, and it is also a point on which I frankly own to you there was a considerable division in the Liberal party itself; but the great majority of the Liberal party did resist, and resist with increasing energy the more they considered the matter, that clause which is called the clause for the representation of minorities, and which, as far as I am able to comprehend its operation, appears to be considered a common nuisance to the towns into which it has been introduced. You will have seen that, out of the ten points I have mentioned, eight points were either carried wholly or in great part. The same, I believe, was the case with the ninth, and nothing now remains of the identity of the Bill originally brought in except the personal payment of rates. That being so, it was still a matter of vital consequence to her Majesty's Government to show that they were the authors of the Reform Bill which had been passed during the period when they undoubtedly held office as Ministers of the Crown, and for this purpose an ingenious theory was constructed by the present Prime Minister in the speech delivered by him at Edinburgh about twelve months ago, which is, perhaps, most commonly known by the name of the "Educate on Speech." The Prime Minister on that occasion—making no reference to any of the nine points, of great importance, every one of them, that had been in the Bill, but which had all been turned topsy-turvy by the Parliamentary activity of the Liberal party—said the Bill was founded upon five principles, and these five principles were introduced to supply the place of the ten points. Now here, gentlemen, were the five principles. The first was that the whole question of Reform was to be dealt with at once; but the whole question of Reform was not dealt with at once, for the Reform of Parliament for Scotland and the Reform of Parliament for Ireland were entirely postponed to a subsequent Session of Parliament. Perhaps it may be meant that the redistribution of seats was to be dealt with in the same measure as the franchise; but what became of redistribution of seats for Ireland? Why, that the Government cut it out of their own Irish Franchise Bill, and it now stands over to be taken up next year, or five years or ten years hence, or whenever anybody pleases. So much for the first principle—that the whole question was to be dealt with at once. The second principle was that no borough was to have its representation extinguished. That was a very broad and manful avowal—I think the most erroneous opinion, but still one with regard to which it was bold, clear, and intelligible. So far as I am informed as to the matter of this process of education that had been assiduously carried on, I believe that the promise that no borough should be extinguished was one of the many promises and inducements held out to the Conservative party to lead them to swallow, with as good grace as they could, the Bill of Household Suffrage. But although, in 1867, we failed in extinguishing any of these small boroughs—which certainly are a disgrace to our representation, for they do nothing to contribute to the vigour of that representative system—I am happy to say that in 1868, on the introduction of the Scotch Reform Bill, we did service

in knocking upon the head some of those small and paltry delinquents, those peccant members of the representative system, and, along with that decision of the House, disappeared the second of the five principles. The third principle was that a Boundary Commission was to extend the boundaries of the principal boroughs of the country. That Boundary Commission sat. Its recommendations were subjected to the consideration of a committee of the House of Commons, presided over by Mr. Walpole. The committee, which was a small one, was composed of members sitting on both sides of the House, and that committee reported unanimously in favour of again knocking on the head all the principal recommendations of the Boundary Commissioners. Liverpool, Manchester, Marylebone, Lambeth, Birmingham, almost all the great towns of the country, were intended to be enlarged to remove many of you from the county, and deprive you of the county franchise. This was one of the five points which entered into the education of the Conservative party, and which was intended to induce them to acquiesce in the Reform Bill by showing how complete a hold would be given them on the county representation. The third principle went the way of the first and second, and disappeared from the system of Reform. The fourth principle was that the county representation should be increased. Well, who introduced the county representation? The Liberal party. We were not satisfied with the increase in the county representation given by the Bill of the Government and enlarging the scheme of the redistribution of seats; we gave a larger amount of county representation than the Government had proposed to give, and I myself stated in the House of Commons the irresistible claims of the county of Lancashire to a much larger amount of representation than was given by the Bill. I was unable through the opposition of the Government to procure for you that augmentation. The fourth principle has not been effaced from the Bill, but it was our principle and not that of the Government. We gave augmentation to the counties beyond what the Government proposed, which would have been further augmented if our numbers had been sufficient to secure it. I have given you nine out of ten points, and four out of the five principles. I now come to the tenth point, and to the fifth principle, and that is the principle which was described in the debate as the personal payment of rates. Now, what do you suppose is meant by the personal payment of rates? I can tell you what it does not mean. It does not mean that the rates shall be paid by the person. There is not the least necessity that the rates should be paid by the person; there is not the least necessity that any man should pay the rates in order to become a voter; any person who pleases may arrange with his landlord to pay the rates, and it may happen that there may be thousands of persons under the present law who do not know there is such a thing as a rate, and who yet come upon the register. I am most anxious to draw your attention to this because it will show what the Government have clung to with such tenacity, and the real sting of the Reform Bill. When the discussion was introduced at the beginning of 1867 the personal payment of rates did not mean the payment of rates by the person. Not only so, but a high moral tone was adopted by the Government and their advocates. It was said that it was not necessary for the occupier to pay the rate provided the rate was but paid, and we were decried as upholders of the doctrine which tended to demoralise the community, and we were met

on the other side by the most affecting declarations to show up to how high a pitch of virtue the householders of the country would be educated, by being called upon three or four times a year to such an exercise of self-denial as would enable them to lay by the money ready to give to the rate-collector when he came. I assure you that this is the whole staple of the argument. We said,—“What business have you to require heroism as a condition of the franchise? You don’t require the rich man to prove that he is a self-denying man in order that he may vote; why are you to ask from the poor man, in the most inconvenient form, that which he now pays in the most convenient form? We admit it to be desirable that he should put by, but although he may not be able to put by, he may be able to exercise the franchise hereafter if he can discharge the claims of the landlord, and enable the landlord to meet the claims of the parish.” However, gentlemen, the advocates of the Government got upon the high horse of virtue and morality, and in their anxiety to carry the highest principles of action through all the lowest strata of the community, they insisted upon that personal payment of rates; but, as I have told you before, when the Bill was passed it was found that the whole attempt to enforce the payment of rates by each individual would be so ridiculous, as well as so oppressive, that on the question being put in the House of Commons as to whether the personal payment of rates meant that the man himself must pay them, the answer was that it was not in the slightest degree necessary. And therefore all this virtue, all this heroism, all this self-denial, and this noble moral basis which was laid for the Reform Act of a chivalrous Government, have been wholly swept away; and what remains? I have told you that the morality has been swept away; but there is something else that has not been swept away, and that is our old friend the fine. Before the Reform Act of the present Government, it was competent for the parish and the landlords to agree together, and for the landlords or owners to agree with the occupiers in conformity therewith, that the landlord should pay the rates and should receive a reasonable discount in consideration of his advancing the money and of his running the risk. The landlord may still pay the rate, but he must pay the rate without the discount, and that is all that remains; but what does that mean? It means a fine upon the occupier. Now, listen to me for two minutes, for I do not use the language, at least purposely, of exaggeration. The occupier is liable, we will say, to pay 10s. in the name of rates. Convenience makes it desirable that the landlord should pay it for him, and the law allows it. But if the landlord is to pay it, I tell you as a simple elementary truth of political economy, he must have some commission for paying it. He will not advance the money, he will not run the risk of not recovering it without that commission. I want to know who is to pay that commission? The answer is inevitable,—the occupier of the house; and, therefore, this is the basis on which we now stand, that, besides the inconvenience which is suffered in many cases of having the composition broken up, the occupier has to pay to the landlord in his rent-book the full rate, if the landlord pays it for him, and along with the full rate a commission to the landlord for advancing the money, and for incurring the risk. That, I say, is a fine which is imposed on the occupier. Now, gentlemen, you have heard it said that a majority of the Liberal party opposed the Reform Bill. We opposed a great many of the provisions of the Reform Bill, no doubt, and I have shown you with what

result. We opposed the Reform Bill in the endeavour to improve it, and at one time those endeavours to improve it very nearly endangered the life of the Bill itself. When we proposed to disfranchise some more small boroughs, what did the Minister say? He said that if the House disfranchised any boroughs the Government must reconsider its position and determine whether it would drop the Bill, and I took the liberty of saying immediately that the Bill was no longer the property of the Government, but of the House, and I distinctly signified that if they thought fit to drop the Bill there would be others perfectly ready to take it up. However, there was one point on which we did go to vital issue with the Government; we objected entirely to the whole of those complex provisions about compound householders. We saw that as the Bill was framed, while it would be quite possible for the independent artisan to procure his own enfranchisement, it would also be perfectly possible for the electoral agent to do it, not so much in boroughs where people are numbered by tens of thousands, but in all the small boroughs; in those places where the election is turned by 10, 20, or, it may be, by 100 votes. We saw that a new fountain of corruption would be opened by those provisions; while they left the franchise to the independent action of the man himself, they left it perfectly open to the local legal gentlemen who conducted the operations of the elections to enfranchise compound householders by hundreds to secure the success of a particular candidate. We were determined to get rid of that mischief, and we insisted that the 500,000 whose rates were paid by their landlords should not on that account be deprived of the franchise. That was a motion on which we took issue with the Government; and, though I think that 289 voted for it, we were, unfortunately, beaten by a majority of 22. We said it was infinitely better, if they thought fit to do it, to restrict the franchise in an open manner, and by a plain and intelligible process, than restrict it in an underhand manner by pretending to give it and then multiplying unintelligible provisions that would prevent the enjoyment of the boon. There were two ways by which the matter could be dealt with. The first, and the better way, was by providing that the franchise should be enjoyed alike, whether the rate was paid by landlord or by tenant, without interfering with composition at all; that was the better way, and the one we recommended. The other, and the worst way, was by providing that the landlord should not pay the rate, and that composition should be abolished. That method was adopted by the Government, and it was far better in my opinion than the original provisions of the Bill, which would have left the great mass of the people unenfranchised, except those who were enfranchised by election trick and chicanery. But at the same time the provisions entailed a great amount of inconvenience and of cruel vexation on a large portion of the ratepayers of the country, and I have troubled you with this long story because I know it is a matter of deep practical importance to the comfort of tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of families in humble circumstances, and I want to show what I have objected to from the first—the absurd provisions of a law which, under pretence of virtue and morality, by-and-by thrown aside, inflicted that inconvenience. I have objected to those provisions from the first, and if I should be a member of the Parliament about to be elected, among the objects which I shall deem to be essential to the comfort and advantage of

the country will be the relief of the newly-enfranchised classes from this most needless and most vexatious interference with their social arrangements.

My hon. friend has referred briefly to the great and absorbing question that more than any other presses on the minds of the people of this country—the question of the state of Ireland—and to proposals which we have made in regard to the Irish Church. My hon. friend has most justly pointed out that the proposals with regard to the Irish Church are not the only proposals which will be requisite in order to pay the full debt of justice to that country, and I will add of justice to this country, for justice to this country requires just as much as justice to Ireland that we should establish throughout the three kingdoms of her Majesty a real equality of rights. But, gentlemen, what I wish you to take heed of at this moment is the real and actual state of Ireland, for I own to you that it seems to me that the most extraordinary blindness rests upon the minds of our opponents with reference to that subject. They persist—I won't say and I don't think it can be wilful, but yet it is that kind of ignorance and blindness which it is impossible to comprehend—they persist in refusing to take any true and adequate measure of the great evil by which Ireland is afflicted. I mean the estrangement of the minds of the people from the law, from public authority, from this country—ay, and even, to a great extent, from the very Throne, under the shadow of which we are so happy to live. Now, gentlemen, is it true, or is it not true, that there is here a real evil to deal with? I ventured, in an appeal to the House of Commons in the course of last Session, to entreat those whom I saw opposite to me to join with us in an effort to efface from the memory of Ireland, by reparation and by justice, all that she had suffered. Well, but what was the answer made to me, and made by a gentleman whom I believe to be an upright as well as an able defender of the opinions he holds—namely, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, the present Home Secretary? He made to me this answer, and I beg you to consider the terms. I had said, "Apply, if you can, a medicine to this disaffection which exists in Ireland;" and he answered, "It is the mind of Ireland that is diseased, a disease caused by long traditions of hatred to the Saxon race that have been kept alive by misrepresentation and by constant agitation. It is thus you have diseased the kindly and generous mind of Ireland, which would otherwise have been in harmony and peace with us." Now that is the representation made, gentlemen, by our political opponents—that there is no real mischief and no real grievance of a serious kind in Ireland, and that all the discontent that exists is due to what is called agitation. Why, gentlemen, the first token of gross error that immediately meets the mind when we examine such reasons is this—that such a speaker as Mr. Hardy, seems to suppose that when a people is well and justly governed, it is in the power of an agitator to make it discontented; and you cannot go through the length and breadth of the world—into any country where tyranny prevails—without finding that this is the very language and the very excuse of the tyrant. The tyrant always says, "If there is no real mischief, there is no real grievance; it is all due to agitation." Well, but what is the state of facts in Ireland? On that, after all, the difference as to the matter of fact is possibly not so very great. The state of facts in Ireland is described by this—that on four successive occasions, through three successive years, we

have been obliged to suspend in Ireland the law of *habeas corpus*, which provides for the personal liberty and security of every one of you. We have been obliged to suspend that law to provide for the maintenance of the peace of the country. (A voice, "More shame.") A gentleman says, "More shame." I do not agree with him. It is our duty to maintain the peace of the country; it is our duty to suspend that law if its suspension be necessary for such a purpose; but it is also our duty, in suspending that law, to look gravely and carefully at the causes which have led to the suspension of the law, and obviate, if we can, the recurrence of occasions so painful and scandalous, which oblige us, on account of the alienation and estrangement of the public mind, to take away from Ireland one of those guarantees of liberty which every one of us values dearer even than life. Lord Mayo, speaking on behalf of the present Government in the House of Commons, told us that a very large portion of the population of Ireland of the lower classes—and, unfortunately, in Ireland what we call the lower class is an overwhelming portion of the whole—that a very large portion of that population was either in positive sympathy with Fenianism, and ready to seize the very first opportunity of armed resistance to the law, or was at all events disposed to look on with favour or with a cold neutrality, and not disposed to render that loyalty and that warm and firm attachment which we desire to see prevailing between the whole of the subjects of the country and the laws under which they live. Gentlemen, what I want to call your attention to is this—that it is a most remarkable picture. Lord Mayo, having described the manner in which the educated classes in Ireland are almost entirely, though not altogether, opposed to the mad and wild attempts of the Fenian conspiracy, went on to say that Fenianism had its root in another land. Well, if there were time, I should like to tell you what the Americans think of Fenianism, for it is most desirable we should hear what they have to say on the subject; but for the present what I wish to point out to you is this, the real state of the Irish mind in America; because, if not we who are assembled here, yet many of our countrymen, delude themselves with the idea that Fenianism in Ireland is only the fancy of the mere scum of the community—of the drunkard, of the beggar, of the thief, of what are called the dangerous or disreputable classes; and they think that in America Fenianism is nothing but the result of a military excitement which necessarily has invaded that country, engaged as it has been in the distracting struggles of a civil war. Now, I am going to read to you some notices which are short, but they are of the deepest interest, from a work on which I think that full reliance may be placed. It is the work of Mr. Maguire, the Member of Parliament for Cork, and a most intelligent man, a very able Member of Parliament, and, I believe, a perfectly faithful and honest witness, and a true and warm-hearted Irishman. No man is more opposed to Fenianism than Mr. Maguire; but he paid a visit to America; he published the results, and I do not believe that either his good faith or his accuracy has been impugned. He made it his business to ascertain what were the elements of the strength of Fenianism in America. Because the question is this—Is it the result of merely accidental cases? is it confined to the outcasts of society? or is it a deeply-rooted inveterate passion that has taken hold of the mind of the people of that country as the violent recoil from the sufferings they have undergone,

and which is likely to become a passion as permanent as it is vehement, unless we can apply the remedy to the fountain-head of the disease? Now, we are fond of thinking that a sentiment of irritation in the Northern States of America has had to do with Fenianism. Take this anecdote told by Mr. Maguire. He meets with an Irish Southerner who has been crippled in the war by the loss of one of his arms, fighting for the Southern cause, but that man holds up the other arm, and he says, "This is the only arm I have left, and so help me God, I'd give it; and every drop of my heart's blood if I could only strike one blow for Ireland." Mr. Maguire goes again to a mine wrought almost entirely by Irishmen, about 300 in number, in the State of Illinois. Among those 300 men he says there were not six drunkards, but he said he found among them the same feeling of passionate love for Ireland—the same feeling of passionate hatred to its Government, of course meaning the British connexion. Mr. Maguire gives his opinion in these words literally:—"My belief is that among Fenians in almost every State or Union there are many thousands of the very cream of the Irish population; indeed, in several places in which I have been I have learned, on unquestionable authority, very frequently of those who regarded Fenianism with positive dislike and its leaders with marked mistrust, that the most regular, steady, and self-respecting of the Irish youth, or the immediate descendants of Irish parents, contributed its chief strength." Gentlemen, I know not what impression such statements make on your minds. They make a deep impression on mine. I think we, perhaps, were pretty well aware of the state of the case; but I would to Heaven that those who are opposed to us, and who think as the Minister of the Crown thinks who has the seals of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, that all the evils of Ireland are owing to agitation—I wish they were aware of this state of feeling. Why, gentlemen, Mr. Maguire adds this—he meets with an Irishman in America who had been evicted from his holding in Ireland 25 years ago. Mr. Maguire says he cherished a feeling of hatred and vengeance not so much against the individual by whom that wrong was perpetrated as against the Government by whom it was sanctioned, and under whose authority it was inflicted. You have read probably within the last few weeks the painful and heartrending accounts of those attempts at eviction on the estate of Mr. Scully in Ireland, which ended in the death of one or two policemen. Possibly you have read in the newspapers the condition of the leases which those holders of the land were required to accept, or else to leave their holdings without a hope of livelihood of any kind. If you have read those conditions, if you bear in mind that such laws can be proposed to the poor occupiers of land in Ireland without offending the law, and if you then add to this recollection that the strong arm of the Government is ever at command to defend the enforcement of whatever is legal,—I think every one of us can well conceive—cannot indeed justify but can excuse, or, if we cannot excuse, can at least understand—how it is that this deep and sullen feeling of estrangement—passive estrangement, sometimes arising into active and burning hatred—has grown up in the minds of that unhappy people. But now, gentlemen, I am going to present to you a contrast, for many of those gentlemen who admit in their full breadth the unhappy effects with regard to the state of the national mind of Ireland—I mean of

a very large portion of that people—many of those who admit the facts dispute the causes, and they tell you with a grave face—and many of them, I believe, are conscientiously convinced, strange as it may appear—that all this is owing, not to agitation, as a Minister of the Crown thinks, but to some unhappy, incurable perverseness of mind in the Irishman that makes him love to live in the atmosphere of turbulence and discontent, just as much as an inhabitant of any other country loves to live in an atmosphere of contentment and loyalty and peace. Certainly, gentlemen, that is a creed of astounding strangeness. I was going to say it was a libel upon Providence. Supposing it happened that there was a particular country on the face of the earth where all mankind were born with only one arm and one leg instead of two arms and two legs, we should think it a most strange and incredible circumstance until we had ocular demonstration of the fact. Rely upon it, it is not one whit less strange, not one whit less incredible, that there should be a people—civilised people, a Christian people, a people engaged like ourselves in the pursuits of industry, a people living as we ourselves do in every domestic relation of life, and fulfilling their duties well—yet that this people should have an insatiable and inextinguishable passion for turbulence and discontent and a hatred of that state of peace which is the only road to prosperity. I might, I think, stand for the confutation of that belief upon its rank absurdity. When such things are told us we have a right to refuse all credit to them. They involve revolutions of the whole course of nature and the whole order of the world, which, many as are the imperfections of the state in which we live, nevertheless are not to be found. But we have the confutation of facts. Lord Mayo even has shown you the state of the Irishman in Ireland; Mr. Maguire has shown you the state of the Irishman in United States. Now go with me across the Canadian border and look a few minutes to the state of the Irishman in Canada, and here, instead of referring to lengthened and various documents, I will quote the words but of a single witness. Possibly the name I am going to mention may be known to you. It is the name of Mr. D'Arcy M'Gee, a gentleman who, I believe, was well known in Ireland during so much of his life as he passed there, as one of the most vehement of Irish patriots, and as one of those who either exposed himself on that account to the penalties of the law, or else was within an ace of so exposing himself. That was the character of Mr. D'Arcy M'Gee. He went to Canada. Canada is under the sway of the same beloved Queen. In what does Canada differ from the United Kingdom? Canada has a free Parliament, and so have we, but Canada has not got unjust laws regulating the tenure of the land on which the people depend for subsistence, and Canada has not got installed and enthroned in exclusive privileges the Church of a small minority. It was said of old that men who crossed the sea changed their climate but not their mind; but mark the change which passed upon the mind of Mr. D'Arcy M'Gee. Let me read you his testimony, for it is in words more significant and more weighty than I can give you—words that cannot be carried home too forcibly to the minds and hearts of the people. Only a few months ago Mr. D'Arcy M'Gee spoke as follows at a public festival given to himself and his colleague at Montreal. Speaking of Fenianism, and of the spirit with which he was prepared to resist it, he says—"I wish the enemies of her internal peace, I wish the enemies of the Dominion, to

consider for a moment that fact, and to ask themselves whether a state of society which enables us all to meet as we do in this manner, with the fullest feeling of equal rights and the strongest sense of equal duties to our common country, is not a state of society, a condition of things, a system of laws, and a frame of self-government worthy even of the sacrifice of men's lives to perpetuate and preserve." Such is the metamorphosis effected on the mind of a disaffected Irishman by passing from a country of unjust laws to a country of just laws; but has he changed his mind with respect to Ireland? He thinks and speaks of Ireland as he thought and spoke of it before. He says, "Speaking from this place, the capital of British America, in this presence, before so many of the honoured men of British America, let me venture again to say in the name of British America to the statesmen of Great Britain, 'Settle for our sakes and your own, for the sake of international peace, settle promptly and generously the social and ecclesiastical condition of Ireland on terms to satisfy the majority of the people to be governed. Every one sees and feels that while England lifts her white cliffs above the waves she never can suffer a rival Government, a hostile Government, to be set up on the other side of her. Whatever the aspirations of Irish autonomy, the union is an inexorable political necessity, as inexorable for England as for Ireland. But there is one miraculous agency which has yet to be fully and fairly carried out in Ireland. Brute force has failed. Proselytism has failed. Try, if only as a novelty, try patiently and thoroughly, statesmen of the Empire, the miraculous agency of equal and exact justice for one or two generations.'" Gentlemen, I wish to impress on the minds of the people of England this advice of Mr. D'Arcy M'Gee. Since these words were uttered the man from whose mouth they proceeded has been removed from this lower world, and his death—due, as some think, to Fenian licentiousness—has added a melancholy dignity and an augmentation of weight and force to the impressive sentiments which he had uttered. It is in pursuance of these opinions that we have proposed to Parliament the policy on which you have to pass your judgment. The first fruits of that policy are before you. I will describe to you in few words what it is that has been said and done—what it is that you are called upon to ratify or to reverse. The House of Commons in 1868, and the House of Commons which still subsists, is certainly not a revolutionary assembly; but that assembly has declared by its vote that it is expedient that the Established Church in Ireland should cease to exist as an Establishment; that all appointments to offices in that Church, of whatever character—and that means all political or State appointments—should be stopped upon the first vacancy in each case; that all life interests and proprietary rights should be carefully respected; and we should likewise put a stop, with similar reserves, to the *Regum Donum* paid to the Presbyterians, and to the Maynooth Grant. So much has been voted by the House of Commons, and as it was my fortune to make the proposal on which that was founded, some interest has been felt about the declarations of opinion with which, on my part, that proposal was accompanied. I have stated the effect of the vote apart from those declarations of opinion, because you are well aware of the very different order of weight and importance that must attach to one and to the other. What the House of Commons thinks, is already far on the way to become the law of this great empire, but what an individual may think.

though it is certainly matter most legitimate for the scrutiny of his constituents, is in comparison with the former light as air. However, I do not scruple to say that I am deeply convinced in the first place, of the necessity of our putting an absolute stop to the system of a State Establishment of religion in Ireland. But, on the other hand, in doing that, over and above the declaration that the life interests are to be respected, and that proprietary rights are not to be invaded, I say it is a dictate alike of wisdom and of generosity that, keeping our end steadily in view, and never failing to march before it, we shall adopt the utmost possible measure of mildness in the means. Everything that equity and that reasonable indulgence could suggest without being inconsistent with the end in view, and that does not impair the efficacy of the measure, should, in my opinion, be favourably entertained. That I may show what I mean I will just refer to two points on which I know great interest has been felt. I can give no guarantee as to what will be the ultimate judgment of Parliament, but I may express my opinion on these points. In the first place there are in the Established Church of Ireland a certain number of endowments which have been given by private persons, which have become in the law public and national property, but which, nevertheless, were given by members of the Church of Ireland for the purposes of the Church of Ireland—just as a Wesleyan Methodist might, if he thought fit, give his money for the purposes of Wesleyan Methodism. My opinion is that those endowments, though technically they may have become portions, you may say, of the public and national property, ought to be carefully respected. In the same way a question arises with respect to the churches that are now possessed and used by the ministers and members of the Irish Establishment, and the parsonages which the clergy inhabit. My opinion, gentlemen, is that the feeling of this country, apart from logic, never would endure that if those clergy and laity are disposed to continue the use of those parsonages and churches for public worship—never would endure that they should be taken away from them. I give these as samples. I must add one important illustration more, and that is, whatever principles of equity or tenderness you may think it wise to employ in winding-up, if I may so speak, the affairs of the Established Church of Ireland, you must apply those same principles of equity and tenderness to the other religious endowments of the country, in so far as from their scope and circumstance they come within range of the principle. I have heard of some who think that vested rights are very sacred things if they are found within the limits of the Establishment, but not so very sacred if they are found within the limits of the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth. If there are persons here who hold that opinion, I must respectfully differ from them—one and the same rule of equity and liberality must be applied to the whole. Forgive me if the word "must" has escaped from my mouth, I meant "ought" to be, in my opinion, applied to the whole. But you will naturally say there is more than this. After we have satisfied every fair and equitable claim, there will be a residue of the ecclesiastical property of Ireland—a residue possibly reaching to a very considerable amount. What are we to do with that? I will state it to you, gentlemen, in another form. In my opinion, that question cannot be conclusively answered by any but those who shall

be responsible Ministers of the Crown, and shall have an opportunity of examining all the facts that bear upon the answer. But, while I say that, I likewise add that the funds which shall have been taken from the Church now established in Ireland—I mean the residue of funds after satisfying every just claim upon them—ought not to be applied to the teaching of religion in any other form whatever. It will be our duty, should you return us to Parliament—and when I say “us” you will forgive me for saying that I have in my mind and in my eye several others gathered upon this platform besides Mr. Grenfell—those who are soliciting the suffrages of this great borough; the gallant officer who has been to contest Birkenhead; my friend Mr. Thompson, who is fighting, one side of this county, towards the rising sun, that same battle which we are fighting, who look the setting sun in the face; and last, but not least, two other gentlemen, one of them a respected inhabitant of this town, who are performing the same patriotic work in a great midland borough. I earnestly hope, gentlemen, that the goodly company that I have endeavoured to describe, and that is now gathered together in perfect harmony upon this platform, will not be dissociated one from the other by any accident on the hustings or the polling booth, but that we shall be found sitting upon the same benches, or upon benches very close together, for the purpose of setting forward that great work, one portion of which I have endeavoured to bring under your view. (A Voice: “And your son.”) I am much obliged to my friend in that quarter (pointing to the gallery), for reminding me that I have a very near and close paternal, as well as public interest in another election, likewise towards the rising sun on the other side of this county, and I am very glad to think that there is any one within these walls to whom the return of my son to Parliament is a matter of interest. Gentlemen, there are a number of points connected with this question which I trust you will not think I have forgotten merely because I may have failed to notice them on the present occasion. What I am desirous most of all to do is to bring into the public view the broad facts connected with the state of Ireland. The first business of public men, and the first business of the electors of a free country, is to bind together the whole of the country in harmony and concord. That business has not been effected so far as Ireland is concerned. We call upon you, gentlemen, to give us the means and to put us in the place where we may use our utmost endeavours to effect it. It is not enough to revile us as enemies of the Constitution in Church and State and foes of Protestantism in disguise—these are matters on which we are perfectly willing to enter into argument. We think we are the best friends of the Constitution; we think that those are the best friends of Protestantism who wish that it should be justice and no more. And as to the Constitution, when we are told that we are going to ruin it, let us bear in mind how many times it has been ruined and destroyed before. It was destroyed—I will only take what has happened within my own recollection—it was destroyed in 1828 by the repeal of the Corporation Tests Acts. It was destroyed again in 1829 by the admission of the Roman Catholics to Parliament. It was destroyed a third time by the Reform Act of 1832. It was destroyed the fourth time by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. It was destroyed a fifth time by the Repeal of the Navigation Laws in 1849. It was destroyed, gentlemen, if my memory does not fail me—but it is really difficult to remember, so many lives has this Constitu-

tion had, and so sad has been its fate—it was destroyed a seventh time when the Jews were admitted within the walls of Parliament; and it was destroyed an eighth time when the Government of Lord Russell had the incredible audacity to propose a Reform Bill to Parliament, with the intention of carrying it or of dying in the attempt. And, therefore, gentlemen, this being so, it appears that our Constitution resembles that animal which is said to have nine lives; but with this fortunate distinction, whereas the cat each time that it loses one of its lives gets a step nearer to dissolution, our Constitution, on the other hand, each time that it is destroyed, comes forth more vigorous than ever from the process, and promises to us all, with more and more of hope and joy, the expectation of handing it down as a blessing to our children. Gentlemen, we ask you for your help in the efforts that we are to make. We ask you in the name of the Constitution not less than in the sacred name of justice. We ask you to listen to the voice alike of policy, and of prudence, and of generosity, and of equity. Listen to that voice—the voice now of the dead, which has come to us from across the Atlantic, and give us your strong help to drive our feeble arms, and enable us to go fearlessly forward in the career of truth and justice.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN THE

T O W N H A L L, N E W T O N.

OCTOBER 17TH, 1868.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I am afraid that your zeal for the cause in which you are engaged has led you to attend this meeting in such numbers that you cannot but be suffering some personal inconvenience, and as that may be so, I think that the best mark of respect I can pay you will be to make no preface at all on this occasion, but to go to work at once upon topics that may interest you. Now, gentlemen, we have heard a great deal during the present election, I am thankful to say, on the subject of public expenditure, and I trust we shall hear a great deal more. For you may rely upon it that the agitation of a question of that nature during an election is attended with most profitable effects. Somehow or other I cannot tell how it is, but the questions discussed at that period seem to sink in the minds of the candidates, as if there was a kind of dew resting upon them, which made them accessible to genial influences. You may rely upon it that so far as I am concerned that subject will not be neglected; but I have seen lately a statement made by one of those in the field on the other side to this effect—a very ingenuous statement—that I have invented this subject of the public expenditure, and dragged it into the field in order to shirk the discussion on the Irish Church. Well, gentlemen, I intend, therefore, to-day, to trouble you in order to disabuse the minds of those who entertain any such idea. I intend to speak upon one or two practical points, which I think to be of great importance with respect to the Irish Church. And, gentlemen, it is needful to do so, for I hold in my hand a pamphlet which is now being circulated in the south of England—I think sent to me by an elector of the county of Surrey, who complains bitterly of the misstatements made by the opponents of the Irish Church. He says—"To speak of these attacks as merely exaggerated statements would be to characterise them much too faintly.

They carry with them, in general, so little of the semblance of truth or candour as to make it hardly possible to acquit their fabricators of intentional deception." This, therefore, gentlemen, is the author who desires to lift from your minds the clouds of misunderstanding that have enveloped them. But how does he set about it? In the next page but one he says—"The property of the Church of Ireland consists of glebe land and tithe-rent charge." And this worthy gentleman, who appears as an oracle upon this question, a gentleman of such tender conscience and abundant information, in quoting the intentional deception of those who have made statements hostile to the Irish Church, coolly asserts that the property of the Irish Church consists of glebe land and tithe-rent charge; but if you have read the report of the Royal Commission on the Irish Church, you will have seen that the Church of Ireland, besides glebe land, charitable and glebe land, parsonages and incumbencies, possesses bishop land and chapter land to an enormous extent, believed to be of far greater value than the annual income they yield, and they are stated to yield an income annually of between £140,000 and £150,000. Now, gentlemen, when I mention that, I dare say unintentional, misstatement, I only do so to induce you to be upon your guard, particularly against those gentlemen who affect to be in possession of invaluable information, and against those who are particularly abusive of men from whom they differ. That you will find to be a good rule. And now, gentlemen, I think it is quite time to have a little public discussion upon the subject of this Irish Church Commission, which was set to inquire into the revenues of the Irish Church; because you may bear in mind that much blame has been bestowed upon the members of the Liberal party, and upon myself not the least among them, because we were determined to raise the question of the Irish Church during the last Session of Parliament, and because we were deaf to the appeals that were made to us to wait until after the report of the Commission had been issued. Now, the report of the Commission has appeared, and what is our position with respect to the policy which is to be pursued upon the question of the Irish Church? That is an important subject, upon which it is quite plain the principal issues will be taken in the elections that are now impending. Consequently, I make no apology in endeavouring to lay before you what I consider to be the real merits, what I consider to be the particular points connected with that subject. Now, gentlemen, consider the various methods of proceeding that have been recommended with respect to the Irish Church. There is the method of standing still. Well, it is not necessary to say much about that method. It would be a waste of your time to show you the doctrine of standing still; it is an insult to your common sense; so gross an insult to your common sense that it is not even recommended by the opposite party in this country, because they go from place to place saying, "We are entirely opposed to Mr. Gladstone and his schemes, though we are for the removal of abuses." Therefore, I will put aside the plan of standing still. The next plan is the plan we recommend—the plan of disestablishment, putting an end entirely to the State Church in Ireland. We will not discuss that, because the merits of it we may discuss at other times. The third plan was the plan of multiplying Church endowments in Ireland. That was a plan which has had great countenance in former times; and it has had

great countenance as late as the month of last March, because in the month of last March was produced the plan of Her Majesty's Government. But, somehow or other, though Her Majesty's Government had never said they would not refer to that plan, yet unquestionably they had, for the moment at all events, turned their back upon it, and as they have turned their back upon it, and as for many reasons I don't approve it, I will not trouble you at present with a discussion on that plan. Now, having disposed of three, we come to the fourth plan—to the plan that is recommended to you by those among the Conservative candidates who have ventured to open their mouths at all upon the subject. But these are gentlemen, it is right that I should say, who, though they cannot endure the removal of the Irish Church Establishment, notwithstanding that, are men who, they beg you to believe, are very favourable to the removal of abuses, though, as far as I know, they have given very little information on the subject. But I have seen one or two of them who say that they wish that some of the recommendations of this Commission should be acted upon for the removal of abuses in the Church of Ireland. Now, I have heard of no plan for the removal of abuses, except the plan of the Church Commission. I feel, gentlemen, that this is one of our difficulties. We are in Opposition, we are not the Government of the country, and yet we are in this strange and extraordinary position, that while we are proposing a policy to direct the Government of the country, the Government of the country—the Queen's Ministers—propose no policy in answer to ours. But, although they have not ventured to propose any policy, although they will be waiters upon Providence, looking for the moment which way the cat is to jump, and perfectly ready to come to any conclusion, establishment, disestablishment, or anything else you like, so soon as it is clear that the adventure would be likely to be a good one, for the present we must consider that to be the plan actually before us. Let us see what is the plan of the Commission. There are gentlemen, a matter of 12 bishops in the Irish Church, and the first important recommendation of the Commission is that we should bury four of them. Not to bury the actual men themselves, but to bury what they call "corporations." For you must know that every bishop of a see, and every incumbent of a parish, is in law a "corporation sole," and four or six "corporations sole" they propose to bury. Well, gentlemen, this proposition of the Commission, I stop to say, is by no means the most liberal bid that has been made. These are all, you will understand, gentlemen, bids to save the residue of the property of the Irish Church. The Irish Church, considered as a spiritual body, is certainly no richer by burying four of its bishops, but the residue of the Irish Establishment is. Well, but we have had a much better bid than that in the report of the Commission. A gentleman, who does not date his letter, writes a long letter to me. He is a strong opponent of our plan, and objects extremely to the disestablishment of the Irish Church, though he is ready to remedy abuses. He thinks that the number of bishops ought to be reduced; and if anybody may seduce you from the path upon which you have entered, from your stern and firm resolution, it is the writer of the letter I hold in my hand—it is by the liberal offer he has made to you. He proposes, gentlemen, to reduce the whole Irish Church to one bishop. And not only so, he says by no means shall that one bishop sit in the House of Lords. Well, gentlemen, I admit that is a most handsome bid. It is

impossible to conceive, if we are to have an Episcopal Church, anything more liberal by way of reform than the offer to reduce that Church to one bishop. We cannot go lower; but even that handsome bid will not satisfy me. I am not satisfied with it as a politician, because I object to the Establishment of the Church in Ireland, even though they were to go beyond my friend who writes the letter to me, and were not only to reduce the bishops to one, but were to propose also to reduce the number of clergymen to one, because there would still be the Establishment, and I object to it on the principle of religious communion. But I must say this, that from what I know of the Irish bishops and clergy, I believe they will repel and reject this recommendation of the Irish Church Commission. They don't want to be cut and carved in this way. I believe many of them are rapidly coming to the conclusion, in the position in which they stand, that the best thing for them is freedom, a clear stage, and no favour. Strong in their conscientious convictions, they are ready, at all events a great deal more ready than they were, and are growing riper every day, to accept the inevitable issue, trusting to the Almighty and their cause to meet all the chances of the future. Well, then, gentlemen, besides—these bishops being disposed of and put away in this indecorous manner (to which I entirely object)—besides this, it is proposed to reduce the income of the bishops. Now, the income of the bishops in Ireland is various—some of them have more, and some of them have less—and it is proposed to place them all at £3,000 a-year. But there is a most singular proposal in the report of the Commission, and it is this: the Irish bishops, you may be aware, sit in Parliament by turns, by rotation; and the proposal of the Commissioners is that any bishop who sits in Parliament shall for the year when he sits in Parliament have £500 extra to pay his expenses. Ay, but wait a moment, don't be in a hurry—pray recollect what this is. It is our old friend the "payment of members," one of the five points of the Charter. I certainly did not expect to find that this plan of paying gentlemen to sit in Parliament, which has always been objected to vehemently as far as I know by the whole Conservative party, and by a very large portion of the Liberal party in this country, and which is not approved at all—that it was first of all to come out under a Commission appointed by the Crown, and having for its purpose to save the Irish Established Church. That recommendation, gentlemen, does not very much help the report of the Commission. Let me say, however, I do not blame the Commissioners. I really believe they have done the best they could. When a man undertakes an impossible task, you must not look too strictly to the performance of it, or judge him, too severely. If a man says "I will jump over the Thames" (or rather I should say the Mersey), and happens unfortunately to alight in the middle, the result is unfortunate, although the man may be a very good jumper. These Commissioners I believe to be perfectly upright, honourable, intelligent men, and I have not a word of blame to cast upon them for the manner in which they performed their functions. My object is to show you the hopelessness of the functions themselves, and to confirm you in the adoption of that other plain, simple, and practical alternative which we have recommended to your notice. Well, the incomes of the bishops are to be reduced; four sees are to be suppressed altogether, and a number of benefices are to be suppressed; where there are not more than 40

members of the Established Church the benefice is to be suppressed. Now, I wonder, gentlemen, whether any of you could inform me why there is to be a State income for a clergyman where there are 40 persons in the parish, and why there should not be a State income where there are less than 40? What do you think now has induced the Commissioners—I have not heard an intelligible explanation of it—to fix upon that number? I own to you, I am entirely at a loss. Now, 40 won't make a congregation, for it is only one in three that can attend church at a time, and 13, which is one-third of 40, is hardly a congregation. I don't know if there is a man in this room who has an idea why the number 40 was chosen. I for my part cannot explain it. I cannot offer a reasonable solution. It did occur to me that perhaps it was because there are 39 articles and one over. This is not conclusive, but it is the nearest approach to a solution that as yet I have been able to get. (A gentleman on the platform, "It is the Jewish over—40 stripes less one.") That is a mode of representing the ministrations that I should be very sorry to follow, and for the present I know of no satisfactory means for the choice of that number. It appears to me, if it were a matter of private arrangement of gentlemen forming themselves into congregations, and finding the means for their support, nobody has any right at all to criticise the number that they choose, whether it be two or three, or two and three hundred; but this is to be a State arrangement, and the national property is to be applied wherever there are forty members, and for that reason I think we are perfectly entitled to ask why that number is chosen, and I don't know what the answer is to be. However, I think the report says that 200 parishes would be suppressed, and the ecclesiastical benefices would be deprived of their ministry by that proceeding. Now, gentlemen, observe the effect of that operation. When you argue the question of the Irish Church, you are constantly told that, though it may be quite true that there are not, in all cases, congregations for the clergy of the National Establishment, yet that, in the peculiar condition of Ireland, it is of the highest civil consequence to her to have spread throughout the country gentlemen who are gentlemen, who are persons of refinement by education, who are bound to good conduct by their profession, who are charitable almost of necessity, and who are constantly resident in the country. Well, now if that be a great necessity, you will observe that these Commissioners, who are to remove the abuses of the Irish Church, propose entirely to deprive 200 out of the 1,400 or 1,500 benefices in Ireland of the advantage of this resident clergy. Well, gentlemen, there is another recommendation or two. It is recommended that a number of chapters shall be suppressed, and it is recommended that, wherever it is possible, the parish clerk shall be consolidated into the grave-digger. I am of opinion, gentlemen, that we have got beyond that. It is a great deal too late to save the Established Church in Ireland by consolidating parish clerks and grave-diggers. But, as they say in Scotland, "mony a mickle maks a muckle," and all these things put together make a considerable sum of money, from the four bishops downwards; and you will be perfectly astonished when I tell you that the Commissioners have not told us how much it makes. Now, I have often been surprised at things I have found in documents, but I never was so much surprised before at a thing that I did not find in a document. Why, if this Com-

mission was appointed for anything in the way of removal of abuses, what they ought especially to have done was to have shown how much could be gathered together by the removal of those abuses, and under what rules and to what useful purposes it could be applied. Gentlemen, it is a very hard case. I can get no assistance from the Commission; but after looking roughly over the thing, and really having very few means of accurate computation, it seems to me, as well as I can reckon, that by the bishops they would save something between £22,000 and £25,000 a year; that by the parishes they might save from £40,000 to £50,000 a year; that by the chapters they would save £10,000 a year; and I cannot tell exactly, but I think they might save £3,000 or £4,000 a year by the grave-diggers. Now, putting all these things together, this removal of abuses would produce a fund of £80,000 a year. That is a very considerable fund; what is to be done with it? Well, gentlemen, the Inquiry Commissioners have simply said that the body which exists in Ireland—a permanent body, and which is called the Ecclesiastical Commissioners—ought to have large discretion to apply it to the increase of the incomes of the clergy in places where there are low incomes with considerable congregations. Now, it is a most extraordinary thing to me, and I am certain that there is a cause for it, why these Commissioners have not computed the savings they were going to make, and why they have not described the manner of applying them. Because, pray observe that under this application you might give it away in sums of £10,000 a year, or £20,000 a year, for they have said nothing as to the amount of augmentations to be made. A more extraordinary omission than this I never knew. But they are men of sense and intelligence, and have not omitted these things without a reason. They were afraid to put them on paper. They were afraid, in my judgment, to say, "We are going to scatter £80,000 a year more among these incumbents of the Irish Church." They knew very well that the Irish Church, of all churches upon the earth, has at this moment the most pay and the least work. Gentlemen, I don't say that in disparagement of the Irish clergy, whom I believe to be an excellent and self-denying set of men, but we must here consider them as public officers. It is not their fault if they have been put in offices with little or nothing to do, but the fault of those who continue them in those offices; and, gentlemen, it is the fault of the Parliament and the fault of the Ministry if that system is allowed to subsist; and, therefore, permit me to say, last of all, it will be your fault, as the electors of the country, if you are so hoodwinked and deluded as to send as your representatives to Parliament men from whom these things are to receive countenance. Well now, gentlemen, just to illustrate what I have said. I have made a rough computation of the remuneration of the clergy of the Church of England, and certainly in many cases I admit it is miserably small; but still upon the whole, taking one office and another, it is at any rate a remuneration which procures for the people of this country the services of an able, an instructed, diligent, and a devoted class of men. There is no doubt about that; you may agree with or differ from them, but that praise it is admitted on all hands they deserve. In England we have—it is a very rough computation—some 20,000 clergymen, and I assume that there are twelve millions of souls in England belonging to the Church of England; that also is a rough computation; and my own

opinion is there are more, but to be within the line I take it at twelve millions. The revenues of the Church of England may in round numbers be stated at £4,000,000, and it follows that if upon the average there is one clergyman for every 600 souls, that clergyman upon the average has £200 of revenue. I hope you don't think that too much. Gentlemen, I must give you this opinion, which is an opinion I candidly entertain. Of course, there are in this country, mixed up with the revenues of the Church are with every kind of social and domestic and political arrangements, a great number of cases of over-paid clergymen.—I have no doubt of the existence of individual cases, but this I must say, that when I look at the greater part of the parochial clergy of this country, and at the many thousands of curates who are labouring in the parishes of the land, from one end to the other, when I consider the education these men have received—and the cost of that education, and the manner in which they give themselves to the work of consoling, instructing, and guiding both young and old—I honestly tell you that I think the labour of what is called the working clergy compared with other labour in this country is about the cheapest labour that any man gives. But, however that may be, I am going to make a comparison. I have said that in England one clergyman with the care of 600 souls gets £200 a year. On the other hand, in Ireland there are 2,000 clergymen, or thereabouts, of the Irish Church, but I don't think it is clearly stated in the report of the Royal Commission. There are under 700,000 souls who are members of that Church, and the revenues I take at £600,000, which is a little below the sum put down by the Commission, and I am bound to say very considerably below the sum at which, for the purposes of this comparison, they ought to have been put, because, in comparison with its resources, £700,000 would have been a more accurate statement of the revenues of that Church. Therefore, it follows that the clergyman in England has £200 a year for looking after 600 persons, while the clergyman in Ireland has £300 a year and looks after 350 persons. ("Oh" and "Shame.") At this rate, and on this basis, the clergyman in England, instead of £200, would have about £515, which might do more, perhaps, to warrant or, at least, to call for the utterance which we heard just now, than the very moderate standard to which I before referred. Well, gentlemen, if that is the case—if the remuneration of the Irish clergy—relatively to work, mind, because that is the true standard for remuneration—if the remuneration of the Irish clergy is, as I believe it to be, relatively to work, somewhere about three times that of the English clergy—then, I think, we can get a pretty good idea why it was that the Commissioners did not tell us—they were going to save by their plans £80,000 a year—that the £80,000 a year was to be distributed among those gentlemen whose rate of pay according to work is already so favourable, compared with the rate of pay of the clergy of the Church of England. Well, but now, gentlemen, I want to tell you, they talk about this removal of abuses; but I ask you to put yourselves in the place of the peasantry of an Irish county, mainly destitute of great towns, in the west and the south of Ireland, and peopled mainly—as the great bulk of the counties are—by Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholic, not unnaturally, recollects that in other times the tithe of those parishes was applied directly for the purposes of his religion. He does not desire that that should

now be done, and I think he is wise in not so desiring. He does not desire it, and you don't desire it, although the Government of the country did desire, if not the tithe to be devoted to the Roman Catholics, yet that for Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, and for others incomes from the public purse should be provided. But go back with me to the condition of the Roman Catholic peasant. The Roman Catholic peasant, at all events, if he has not directly had the benefit of the tithe, yet he has seen living in his neighbourhood that which has been truly described, according to the account of it I cited a few minutes ago, as an educated gentry, resident in a country that wants residents, bound to good conduct, and usually given to benevolence and kindness. And it is always alleged, and I, for one, do not deny it—for I can believe it possible in most cases, and in many cases it is true—that the Irish peasant has benefited largely by the goodwill of the Protestant clergymen. It is notorious that in the time of the Irish famine the Protestant clergy of the Established Church were the channels through which the large portion of the bounty of England was administered to Ireland, and that in that way and in many ways they have had an opportunity of cultivating the personal goodwill of the people. But that, in my opinion, is no apology at all for diverting the Church property from the purposes for which it ought to be applied, if there is to be an Establishment at all—namely, the bulk and majority of the people. But observe this, that at all events it has been some consolation to the Irish peasant that the tithe which was taken off the land which he cultivated has been spent in the neighbourhood, and in his view, by the men with whom, in many instances, he had kindly relations, and from whom on many occasions he would receive secular, civil, and even moral benefit. But now it is proposed to cure abuses, and what is to be the cure of the abuse? They propose where there is a parish—say, in Mayo or Galway—with 5,000 or 10,000 Roman Catholics and a mere handful of Protestants, that the tithe of that parish shall be carried away out of the parish altogether, and, under the recommendation of the Commission to cure abuses, the proceeds of their land and the fruits of their labours, where will they go? They will be carried into the suburbs of Dublin and Belfast, where wealthy members of the Establishment abound. Wealthy, at all events, in comparison with those from whom they are taken, and many of them wealthy in the strictest sense of the term. They will be exported from one portion of the country and imported into another portion of the country. While retaining all the odium of being applied to the Church of the minority, it will lose the graces, recommendations, and consolations which hang about it from the kindly relations between these Protestant clergymen and the Roman Catholic population. They may hear nothing more of it; and, in my opinion, I am speaking truly, you hear sometimes that we are charged with confiscation, but in my opinion that is confiscation. Those funds, gentlemen, are local funds. The tithe of a parish was never given except for the purpose of maintaining religion in the parish; and to take the tithe out of a parish of Galway or Clare for the purpose of meeting the wants of Protestant populations in Dublin and Belfast—I do not care who hears it—is, in my opinion, whatever the intention may be, dangerously like to an act of public plunder. Gentlemen, I ventured to say two months ago that I was an anti-reformer in the Church of Ireland; that I am not for the removal

of these abuses, because I know that every attempt to remove one abuse causes another, and perhaps one more gross and more offensive, to spring up in its place. Please to hear a short illustration of what I had in view—that when you remove the abuse of having a Protestant clergyman planted in the midst of a large Roman Catholic population, with only a handful of Protestant souls to whom to minister, by carrying the tithe away together, and by applying it in a manner in which the peasant has no interest whatever, approximate or remote, civil or religious, you do away with one abuse, but you put another in its place. Now let us see, if you have patience for a moment—because this is a matter of really great public interest and importance—let us see how far this removal of abuses would be effectual, even upon the professions with which it is set out; because pray recollect that it is no satisfaction to me, gentlemen, if I am an elector of this country, to receive those general statements, however well they may be intended, from this candidate or that, “I am very well disposed to remove abuses.” Why, gentlemen, I could go over the whole world and reform everything very cheaply indeed on those terms, because wherever I find any question of evil that afflicts humanity I have only to say, “Very well, why don’t you remove the abuse?” But here we want to know what are the abuses and how they are to be removed, and I have done something to exhibit to you the hopelessness, and, I cannot help saying, viewed in these days in which we live, the absurdity, of attempting to remove those abuses. The abuse which is to be removed is the abuse of over-paid clergymen in the midst of scanty populations and scanty flocks, or no flocks at all. But, now, let us see how far the plan of the Commissioners will carry us. I have told you that it is to suspend or put an end to, all appointments or benefices in parishes where there are less than forty members of the Established Church. What I have been speaking so far I speak on my own responsibility alone, but now the figures which I am going to give you I take from a gentleman whom I believe to be as well informed as any one in the three kingdoms upon this subject—an Irish clergyman, Dr. Maziere Brady, who for some years has made himself conspicuous in Ireland by his courageous advocacy o’ a just and manly policy in regard to the Irish Established Church. Now, these cases I am going to mention to you will, I think, perhaps rather surprise you. These are the cases which he gives me, and I hope his letters will be published before many days are over, so that every one may be able to judge of them for themselves, because error here and there may lie hid, but whatever the facts, they cannot be shaken in the main, they are so strong. Here are the facts. He gives me the cases and the names of 14 benefices in Ireland. Now, in those 14 benefices, in each of them, besides the incumbent there is a curate, and the curate upon the average receives 100 guineas a year, and the population of the 14 benefices is 1,332 souls of the Irish Established Church; and the 1,332 souls have 14 curates to look after them, independent of the incumbents, receiving 100 guineas a year apiece. Well, you will agree with me that where there are 14 clergymen to look after 1,332 souls, that is a rather liberal allowance, when you come to consider that if you were to apply that rule to the town of Liverpool the town of Liverpool would be equipped with between 5,000 and 6,000 clergymen. I assume, therefore, gentlemen, that the 14 curates had the cure of those 1,332 souls. Well, but over and above the

100 guineas apiece paid to the curates, there is an income received by the 14 incumbents of those 14 benefices; and those incomes, according to Dr. Brady, amount to £8,192. And Dr. Brady says, truly, I think, and very fairly, that you may well say, considering the 14 curates and the 1,332 souls, that the eight thousand odd pounds is received for doing no work at all. Well, gentlemen, if there are abuses in the Irish Church, I should think this is one of them. That is an average of 95 souls; but it is useless to take the average of the souls to each, because the work is done by the curate, but the incumbent, however, receives £6 per head for doing nothing in respect of these 1,332 human beings. Now, let me see what the Commissioners do, because I remember once seeing a ludicrous and most ingenious picture of a man who was vaunting of some wonderful solution or cure that he had for the hair, and in order to illustrate the wonderful and astonishing fertilising properties of his mixture he printed two woodcuts. The first was the head of his victim, his patient, before he used the mixture, and the second was the head after he used the mixture. When he began he was nearly bald; when he ended the course of this application his whole head was covered with luxuriant flowing locks and brown beard down to his waist; in fact it was a ravishing description. That is exactly what is proposed to be done with the Irish Church. It is admitted there are abuses in the Irish Church; it is now presented to you by Mr. Cross and Mr. Turner as admittedly in a ricketty condition; but then it is to have this application—it is to have the receipt of the Commissioners applied to it, and after the recommendations of the Commissioners have passed into law, then you are to have the Irish Church turned out as a model Establishment. Therefore, you want to know what this model Establishment will be, and I will tell you. You have 14 of these churches. On the recommendations of the Commissioners nothing will take place until one generation—at least they will not take full effect, you understand—until one generation has gone by, because, as is very proper, life interests have to be respected; but if you have the patience to wait until after these recommendations have passed into law; if you have patience until 30 or 40 years, the recommendations will then, it is probable, have taken full effect, and out of the 14 churches five will have ceased to exist—that is to say, they will cease to exist as benefices, and then there will remain nine, and the nine will present this picture to you. There will be nine benefices, with 1,172 people among them, not £150 apiece. There will be nine curates at 100 guineas each, to take care of the 1,172 people—that is about 130 apiece, and I think they may manage that. And there will be nine incumbents having nothing to do, because the curates will do it, and they will receive for doing nothing £5,639 in the Church out of which all the abuses have been removed. Now, gentlemen, unless there be the grossest of errors in the figures that have been supplied to me, and on which I am bound to say I rely—I am convinced there may be errors, but if there are any errors they will be trivial and slight—that is the result of the plan of the reform in the Irish Church that is now recommended, and attended with all the injustice I have pointed out in transferring the tithes of Connaught and Munster to enrich the congregations of Ulster and Leinster. That will be the result attained in the way of curing the abuses after I and most of you are dead and gone, some 40 years hence. Well, gentlemen, I think I may fairly say that it is not necessary

to dwell upon the plan of the Commissioners to cure the abuses of the Irish Church. The Commissioners themselves, and I cannot blame them, are apparently afraid to explain them; they keep back the principal and most important figures that are necessary to make their plan intelligible—a plan which satisfies none of the just demands of the Irish people, which removes none of the slight and insult offered to them through the medium of their religion; it would abate none of the painful difficulties and controversies that now tear and rend that people into one party and another party, instead of being a brotherhood of united citizenship. I think, gentlemen, I am justified in saying we do right to reject that plan. Now, gentlemen, before I sit down there is another point that I must mention to you. You are told that the Irish Church is to be maintained for the benefit of Protestantism. Now, that is not an unfair statement of mine. You know that is a favourite argument of all those who are opposed to us, and you are reproached probably—many of us are, at all events, reproached—from time to time with being the favourers of the Roman Catholic religion. With the Roman Catholic religion, gentlemen, we have nothing whatever to do; the controversy in which we are engaged is a controversy of civil justice. We look on the Irish people as the Irish nation, and what we say is this—we refuse to withhold justice from them not on the ground alleged by you—namely, that they are Roman Catholics—but that they are entitled to justice as full and unrestricted as any man among us. I need not add they are entitled—of course they are entitled—to nothing more. But the allegation is that this Church is maintained for the benefit of Protestantism. Now, the fairest test of that is found in the number of Protestants that have been reared under the present system compared with the other or Roman Catholic population of the country. Now, you must recollect that it is utterly impossible for us to form a true judgment on that subject except by going back as far as we can; and the earliest authentic statement that we have upon that subject is this:—In the year 1672 Sir William Petty, a statesman of that day, gave the results of an inquiry—which I believe is admitted to have been not very far from the truth—into the relative numbers of Protestants and Roman Catholics, and they were these:—There were three Protestants for every eight Roman Catholics in Ireland; and in order that I may make the comparison in an intelligible manner, I will compare these different fractions in the way in which we used to do when we went to school—that is, I will reduce them to what is called a common denominator, and that means 45 Protestants to 120 Roman Catholics. That was the proportion in 1672, some 200 years ago. Ever since that time you have had the whole ecclesiastical property of the country in the hands of a small minority under the name of supporting Protestantism. Not only that, but for the greater part of that time you have had in operation cruel and abominable laws for the purpose of suppressing the Roman Catholic religion by means that were grossly wicked and unjust; and the strongest Protestant among you, I am quite sure, would say, if I were to run through the particular of these laws, even that strong language is not too strong to describe the laws. Now, I have got to say one thing for the Irish penal laws—that is the name by which they are known—and that is this: they were not wholly devoid of efficacy; they applied the screw pretty closely; and so long as the penal laws were in operation, so far as our information

goes, it does appear that to some extent they succeeded in keeping down the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland. All I can say of the figures I give you, gentlemen, is they are the best that can be had. They have not the precision of a modern Census of population, but I have given them in the House of Commons and they have never been impugned. They have never been scrutinised and found wanting. In 1730 a Government inquiry into the relative numbers of Roman Catholics and Protestants found that there were two Protestants for five Roman Catholics. Well, I told you before that in 1672 there were 45 Protestants to 120 Roman Catholics; in 1730 there were 48 Protestants to 120 Roman Catholics; but about that time there was a certain Bishop Burke, a Roman Catholic prelate in Ireland—I forget of what see—who made an estimate of the numbers, and he estimated that there were two Protestants for four Roman Catholics—that is, 60 Protestants for 120 Roman Catholics. The application of the screw was doing, in some degree, its work. In 1672, again, Bishop Burke computed that the Protestants were increasing. Shortly after that the penal laws began to be relaxed. In 1784 a computation was made, in a manner which I admit is a very rough one; it was by estimating the proportions of the people of different religions in the beggars. There was then no Poor Law in the country. What I wish you particularly to observe is this, that those figures I am giving you about numbers are what are called *ex parte* figures. I take them from Mr. Giffard's "Life of Pitt," a book written in a totally different sense, and they are the best figures I can obtain. In 1784, according to the return, which is loose, but not very far from the mark, it is still said there were two Protestants for four Roman Catholics—that is to say, 60 Protestants for 120 Roman Catholics; therefore, you will observe, gentlemen, that under this penal system, beginning in 1672 with 45 Protestants for 120 Roman Catholics, that they had by 112 years of persecution amended—if it is to be called amended—the position of the Protestants so far as to have 60 instead of 45 Protestants to 120 Roman Catholics. At that time we began to relax the penal laws. In 1801—I now quote the authority of Mr. Musgrave, the historian of the Irish revolution, who is certainly a very thoroughgoing partisan—in 1801 the penal laws having now been materially relaxed, and the Roman Catholics even admitted to the elective franchise, he found that the Protestants were 40 to 120 Roman Catholics, having been 60 some 20 years before. We then went on and had further relaxation. We even admitted the Roman Catholics—and I am very thankful we did—to Parliament, and in 1834 we had another religious Census, and the proportion was now one Protestant to four Roman Catholics, or 30 Protestants to 120 Roman Catholics. Now, gentlemen, in 1861 it is true there is a slight improvement—it is a fractional improvement. I must get another denominator in order to exhibit it, I cannot exhibit it well upon the denominator of 120 that I have got. In 1834 the Protestants were a trifle under one to four; in 1861 they are a trifle over one to four—that is all the difference. But recollect what had happened in the meantime—that awful famine of 1847, and the enormous wholesale exportation of the poorer population—that is the Roman Catholic population of Ireland, across the Atlantic. Therefore, gentlemen, I say that although, casually, the return of 1861 is a trifle better than that of 1834, in reality, if you allow ever so moderately for the operation of these powerful causes, it is a worse return

than that of 1834; and I reiterate the assertion that Protestantism, under the influence of this system, which we did once maintain in the form of penal laws—but then there was a kind of efficacy, at any rate a kind of brutal and bad efficacy attached to it—since we have relaxed those penal laws, while the system continues to be unjust, it has ceased to be effectual, and Protestantism has dwindled under its operation. Now, gentlemen, I must refer to one more point, which will, perhaps, require your attention, because I have been greatly found fault with for this statement, and I will show you the answer which has been made to me. I will take it from this pamphlet—[“Short Notes on the Irish Church Question,” by a Layman]:—“Mr. Gladstone insists that as a missionary Church the Irish Church has failed.” I do insist with great regret, naturally, but at the same time with strong conviction. “In order to prove this he quoted Sir William Petty to show that in 1672 there were 800,000 Roman Catholics to 300,000 Protestants.” Now comes the answer to me, and I think you will be somewhat amused when I unfold the meaning of it:—“But Mr. Gladstone kept back the fact that of these 300,000 Protestants only 100,000 were members of the Irish Church, and the remaining 200,000 Nonconformists.” And therefore, they say it is true that the Protestants may have dwindled as a whole, but look at the relative numbers of the Church and the Nonconformists, and then you will see that the Church of Ireland has not failed at all, but has very largely increased her numbers. Well now, gentlemen, I think that will be a view of the matter entirely new to you; I think it will be new to my friends on the platform of all denominations. It appears, then, after all, that the Church of Ireland does not exist in Ireland for the purpose of maintaining the light and glory of the Reformation, as Mr. Gathorne Hardy says, but that the business of the Church of Ireland is to convert st^ray Nonconformists and bring them back to the fold. Now, gentlemen, this really is a discovery. It is a magnificent discovery. It seems to shift the whole state and position of affairs. It gives us a new “point of view,” as they call it. It is a most serious matter if, after all the consideration we have given to this matter, which we thought lay mainly between the Church of Ireland and the people of Ireland, we are to be told that it does not lie between them at all; that it is admitted that the Church of Ireland has failed wholly, utterly, miserably as regards the people of Ireland—the mass of the people of Ireland who are Roman Catholics—but that it has had a magnificent success, and those unfortunate Presbyterians who were two to one to the Church people 200 years ago are now somewhat less than the Church people in number. Therefore, gentlemen, pray consider that it is an anti-Protestant propaganda you are invited to pursue. That is the answer they give; I believe it to be the only answer; but I must also tell you this, that if it were true it would not be a very good answer. I suspect the six or seven millions of Nonconformists in this country—in England—the three millions of Presbyterians in Scotland, and the half-million or more of Presbyterians in Ireland, would not be particularly well pleased at this new view of the position of the Church, the friends and advocates of which, in the days when things are quiet are apt to turn what is called the cold shoulder to the Presbyterians; but of late there are a portion of them, and particularly the active politicians, who make the most warm and moving appeals to

the Presbyterian body, and entreat them to put shoulder to shoulder and confront the enemy in the field in the name and for the sake of the interests of their common Protestantism. Now, gentlemen, the explanation is this—but I must not go at length into it. In Ireland, in the beginning of the seventeenth century—it is difficult, indeed, to trace minutely the confused ecclesiastical history of a country which at that time was but half-organised—but it is well known that a large portion of the parishes and incumbencies of the country, a very large portion indeed of the province of Ulster, and some portions, I believe, beyond it, were in the hands of Presbyterians. Of course, therefore, the Presbyterians counted at that time as a very large number in proportion to the numbers of the Church; and it is perfectly true up to a certain point that by the fact of becoming Episcopalian, by the fact of having an Episcopalian Government placed over these parishes, as the Episcopalian Government became uniform over the country, instead of having a Presbyterian Government placed over them, a number of persons came to be counted as Episcopalians who before that had been counted as Presbyterians. That is the explanation of it. There is no truth in the assertion that the Irish Church has been successful in putting down Dissent either by force or persuasion. It has been successful in putting down nothing; but it has been successful in putting up something. It has put up agitation; it has put up controversy; it has put up bitterness; it has put up, as I have shown, in comparison with Protestantism, the Roman Catholic religion, which has thriven, and does thrive, under that sense of civil injustice which makes all its professors who are loyal men rally round it with determined adherence. Gentlemen, our motto is—“Be just and fear not.” Do you approve the motto or do you not? It may be that we have strong interests arrayed against us. Never mind. What we shall do, gentlemen, my hon. friend near me and I—we shall use the slender means in our power to lay out the truth and the reason of the case before you. Having done that, as we shall do it from place to place, we shall appeal to you for aid; we appeal to you to lay aside all timid fears and apprehensions, to be on your guard against mistake and delusion, to put on the courage of Englishmen—nay, more, I will add, to clothe yourselves with that spirit of equity which ought to distinguish every Christian, and to carry our cause onwards to a speedy triumph.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN THE

CO-OPERATIVE MILL, LEIGH.

OCTOBER 20TH, 1868.

In addressing you to-night, the first duty, and not the least pleasant duty, I have to perform, is to thank you for the hearty reception you have given us to-day, both out of doors and in doors; and my second duty is to express my share of gratitude to the Co-operative Society at Leigh, which has supplied us with this spacious place of assemblage, and I will now, with your kind assistance and support, endeavour to do that which could not be possible except with such aid—namely, to address you upon some of the subjects which are at this moment of the deepest interest to yourselves and England. Gentlemen, the name of the Co-operative Society at Leigh induces me to say a few words upon a question which is the subject, at the present time, of a very national interest, and is, I think, likewise of a very needless alarm. I mean the question of the relations between capital and labour. There are those who consider that this is among the great difficulties—if it be not the greatest difficulty—that clouds the future of our country. I own I am not of that opinion. I have sufficient confidence in the good sense of my countrymen of all classes, and especially of the two great classes that are more immediately concerned, to feel a perfect conviction that, not perhaps without some occasional and local difficulty, but without any general or hopeless difficulty, they will find their way through the meshes and the mazes of that question to a satisfactory solution. Certainly, one class of measures to which I look with the greatest interest for the purpose of helping the attainment of that solution are the measures which, without removing the labouring man from the class of labouring men, nevertheless give him some of the sentiments and some of the interests of the capitalist. Don't suppose from what I have said that I am one who believes that the function of the retail tradesman

—the distributor of commodities—ever can be either permanently or beneficially supplanted—that I do not believe. I believe that the union of working men among themselves in co-operative societies may be extremely beneficial as a check upon the more ordinary method of manufacture—that of great capitalists, and of disturbing either the wholesale or retail tradesmen; but that it will supplant those methods I, for one, wholly disbelieve. And I think it but fair to say two things: on the one hand, I am convinced it is only in the very advanced of the labouring wage-earning classes that co-operation can be carried on to a beneficial extent, and it argues that in this particular neighbourhood the labouring classes are greatly advanced; but, on the other hand, the risks and responsibility of joint-stock companies are serious. I must own to you that although ever since my mind was given to commercial subjects I have been a pretty steady adherent to the principles of free trade, yet I have not had that unflinching faith in the principles of joint-stock companies, as offered to individual energy and enterprise, which I know has been entertained by many who are far greater authorities than I am myself. I hope, therefore, that the greatest caution will ever be exercised by the labouring classes with regard to joint-stock enterprise, and I may add every other class; but wherever their joint-stock enterprise succeeds, I heartily rejoice in it, and bid them God-speed. There is another mode, favoured, I know, by some highly intelligent men of this district, and to which I can't but wish an unqualified prosperity, and it is this mode—where private individuals, or a limited number of private individuals, carry on their business on the principle of joint-stock companies, and are enabled so to adjust their operations and accounts that they can contrive to give to the workpeople an interest in the proceeds. I know not, and it would be presumptuous in me to attempt to know, when that principle is capable of extension; but I believe that wherever it is capable of application it is one of the most beneficial methods of dealing with the difficulty which besets the question between capital and labour now presented to us. There is one other method to which I can but refer, although the name of the person connected with it—most honourably connected with it—a gentleman of foreign descent, is less known in this part of the country than in the country where he resides, and where his beneficial exertions have been particularly felt—I mean Mr. Mundella. He is a man who has devoted, at no small sacrifice, his time, and no common abilities and energies, in organising those methods of friendly and systematic communication between workmen and capitalists in the form of boards of arbitration, which, so far as the operation has yet been tried, has produced the most happy results. Gentlemen, I refer to that not as if I were competent to give a judgment that proceeds with much greater weight from practical men, nor because I believe we have as yet exhausted the whole catalogue of expedients for adjusting those difficulties which must necessarily arise in the natural and wholesome competition—for it is wholesome competition—between the capitalist and labourer in the division of the products of industry, but because I think they are hopeful indications of what we may expect under the teaching of experience, and that they go to warrant the sanguine opinion I have myself expressed, that although

this undoubtedly may be a serious problem, which would be dreadfully aggravated by narrow views or by angry passions—a problem demanding the closest and most careful attention that can be given to it by the most competent persons—yet it is a problem of which we may look for a satisfactory solution, and which we need not reckon among the difficulties that threaten the happiness and prosperity of our country. But I pass from that subject, and I wish to take this opportunity, seeing that we are favoured to-night, as upon former occasions, with the assistance of that powerful agency that disperses over England and over the world what is addressed to local audiences in connection with the occurrences of an election—I wish to take advantage of the presence of that agency. That purpose, perhaps, you may think a little personal, and you may possibly think it a little selfish; but it is his—I am at this moment overwhelmed with communications from correspondents of every rank and degree, of all circumstances and conditions, with relation to matters of controversy that it would be impossible to enumerate. Sometimes they ask me for answers which, having but twenty-four hours in one day, it is not possible for me to give, and sometimes they ask me to explain the points to which they refer at public meetings. Now, I wish to beg my correspondents, one and all, through the medium of this assembly, to be assured that their communications, most of which I can truly say are both friendly and intelligent, have the best consideration I can give to them, and that if I seem to neglect them it is only because of the greater pressure of other subjects, and of my duty, in occupying your time as I do, to occupy it with those questions which appear to be of the greatest and of the most commanding interest. Now, I will make another remark which is not personal, but local, and I can make it with pleasure because it concerns, not only ourselves, but those against whom we are pitted in this contest. We, gentlemen, in South-West Lancashire, are like our friends and our opponents in the other division, engaged for the moment in a pretty arduous contest; but, I rejoice to say that up to this time, so far as I can judge, in the South-Western division of the county it has been conducted with exemplary good humour. Everybody knows throughout Lancashire when a man enters into a contest he is in earnest, and means to do his best. On that side, gentlemen, we shall not be suspected; if we are, I trust our men will redeem us from the suspicion. But in other parts of this country I must say that it appears to me, to judge from placards, from letters, and from many communications that have reached me—it appears to me that the course pursued by our opponents has gone beyond the just limits of political warfare—that truth has been too much tampered with—that private life has been violently insolently invaded—that violence and almost fury of language has been indulged in; and if I refer to these things it is for the purpose of congratulating you and others, paying a debt that is due to our opponents, when I say that whatever may take place beyond our borders—and into that I won't enter—I have not seen within those borders, on the one side or the other, the slightest disposition to trespass beyond the fair and just bounds of public controversy; and I humbly hope that for my own part I may do what I am sure you do—observe those bounds with the same care for the

future. I have made this preface because I am obliged to grapple pretty closely with the language of our opponents upon some matters of great public interest, but I wish to do so with the most frank expression of my personal respect, and deal with the argument, but not with the man apart from the politician. Gentlemen, yesterday week, in the town of Warrington, I drew attention at some length to the subject of the public expenditure, and I pointed out what appeared to me to be the main considerations necessary to be instilled into the minds of the electors at this juncture. Those considerations turned mainly upon this—that the investigation of the past was of secondary importance, but that the topics, however, which had been raised with respect to the past in no degree diminished the responsibility of those who are now in power for the rapid, and I think even alarming increase that has begun to take place in our expenditure, and that as regards that increase, not indeed the whole responsibility, but the chief responsibility of it, was to be charged upon the Ministers of the Crown, although it may be your opinion that the House of Commons is likewise to blame, and although I do not shrink from expressing my opinion that wherever there is sluggishness in the House of Commons it is because there is always a corresponding lethargy in the country. Gentlemen, I wish to take the opportunity of correcting a verbal inaccuracy into which I fell. You must have seen it stated that there was a great increase of expenditure in the year 1859, which is perfectly true, and again in the year 1860, which is perfectly true. In speaking of the expenditure in the year 1860, I said that that was due to a war in China which had broken out, not under us, but under the instructions given by the Government that had preceded us, and in connection, as I said, with Lord Elgin's going to the mouth of the Peiho to sign a treaty with China. In my haste, when I said Lord Elgin, I ought to have said his brother, Sir Frederick Bruce, and I ought to have said that he went to ratify, not to have signed, a treaty with China. These errors I ought to correct, because it was supposed I gave an opinion upon the policy. I gave no opinion upon the policy whatever. That is a large matter to discuss. What I wished to point out was this—that the *de facto* cost of that war had arisen in connection with the operations of a former Government, and not with our Government, and the fault I found at that moment was not with those who had given instructions, but the fault was with those who have at this time endeavoured to persuade the country that the cost of that war, which had grown from transactions entirely belonging to a former Government, was due to the Government of Lord Palmerston instead of being due to their predecessors. But, gentlemen, asking that you will excuse me for this digression, I come to a matter which lies more nearly at close quarters. It is not denied that £3,000,000 have been added to the expenditure in two years—to the permanent expenditure, gentlemen, not to the occasional expenditure, not to the expenditure brought about by the emergencies of what we hoped was a momentary and an incidental war, but to the permanent expenditure of the country connected with the maintenance of its ordinary establishments. But, gentlemen, that fact stands. I rejoice that it stands, and not only so, but that it has been brought home to the mind of the people of this country. For believe me, gentlemen, that

to a question of praise or blame, whether you think censure belongs to us, or whether you think censure belongs to our opponents, I am comparatively indifferent, though I do not say I am absolutely indifferent, provided the effect of these discussions will be, as I have good hope it will, to bring about in future, if you, gentlemen, do your duty, some more careful stewardship of the finances of this country. Well, now, gentlemen, one of our honourable opponents meets my charge, not by vindicating the present Administration, but by saying that it was my duty to have prevented this expenditure, and I have received to-day some verses which are the production of a Conservative working man. I think they do great credit to his ingenuity; and, moreover, I value these verses very much, because we ought always to value greatly all specimens of a species that is rare. You know, perhaps, that a few years ago a mammoth was discovered frozen in the ice upon the shores of the White Sea. An enormous value was set upon the bones of that mammoth, and would have been set upon its flesh if it had not been that the moment it was thawed the dogs got at it and devoured it. Now, my wish is to preserve—to preserve in ice if you like, or in any way you like—the effusions of a Conservative working man. But, however, he is a very ingenious fellow. I recognise him as a man and a brother, of the same flesh and blood, and he states this objection extremely well. These are his verses, gentlemen:—

"Now you are lecturing thro' the land
And leading working men astray,
By telling them things were not good
For which they did their money pay.
We wish to know, Sir, how it is
To oppose these measures you did not strive,
While there was on your side, you say,
A majority of sixty-five."

I don't think Mr. Turner stated his point badly, but I think the working man has stated it better still. Still, I must endeavour to pull the working man to pieces a little. He says I said I had a majority of 65. When did I say so? He says so; but I never said it. It would be very difficult, indeed, gentlemen, between the time of the general election and the time of the Resolutions on the Irish Church, to state what the majority in this House of Commons was or where it lay. "But," he says, "why did you not object to this expenditure?" My answer is twofold. In the first place I must tell you this, that the great questions of expenditure connected with the maintenance of the army and navy are questions of the life or death of the Government, and when you challenge a hostile issue in the House of Commons upon such a question as whether, for example, 40 new ships are to be built for the defence of the country, it is equivalent to moving a vote of want of confidence in the Government. That being so, I tell you plainly that our resignation on office in 1866 made it our duty to give to those who succeeded us a chance of dealing with the question of Reform; and, however we might object to their mode of proceeding in regard to the public expenditure, the paramount and commanding interests connected with the franchise and the Constitution made it impossible for us to take issue with the Government upon questions of that order. Short of taking issue with the Government, I tell you that we did object. I

could show you the passages in *House of Commons*, if you wished it, where I have drawn down on myself the wrath—and a terrible wrath, no doubt—of several members of the present Cabinet for finding fault with and impeaching what I thought their most needless and wanton expenditure in naval and military matters. Not only was it what was said by me, but I have the happiness of sitting in the House of Commons in constant connection with many of the ablest men in that House, and my friends Mr. Childers, Mr. Stansfeld, and other gentlemen perfectly competent, did arrange with me and carry on in connection with me that plan of questioning the Government on that scheme of building 30 or 40 unarmoured ships for the purpose of maintaining the distant services at various parts of the globe. Gentlemen, we did endeavour to act on the Government and to produce an impression on the House; but the House—and I do not find fault with it—was unwilling to enter into matters which, though important, were secondary to the main question at issue. You have heard something this year about meetings in my sitting-room. We had meetings in my sitting-room to consider seriously whether we should venture this year to ask the vote of the House of Commons on the state of the public expenditure, and we deliberately decided that we should not, because the answer would have been this—It would have been felt impossible to interfere with the progress of the Reform Bills, and we should have procured from the House of Commons an adverse vote on questions of expenditure, which would have been given probably from motives extraneous to questions of expenditure, but which would have been damaging to the permanent prospects of the cause of public economy. I say, therefore, that on this great question we went as far as we could—as far as we dare, as far as we should have been justified, with regard to your interests, to go—in declaring our opinion of the conduct of the Government. It is idle and untrue to say that these views and proceedings of the Government were not questioned, as anyone can satisfy himself who chooses to consult the records of Parliament, while it is quite true that the sum total of the public expenditure depends on these greater subjects. It is also true that there are many subjects less important, but not altogether unimportant, on which it may at times be possible to question or challenge the proceedings of the Government. With respect to these minor subjects, I beg to assure you that we saw the opportunity—we did question them, both by debate and division. And here I come to my answer to Mr. Turner, and my answer to my friend the working man, and it is that whenever we did question them, there was Mr. Turner in his place to vote against us. I will give you an example. We had a very good opportunity offered us last year. What you have to fear when you raise these questions of economy is that the supporters of the Government will denounce them as party questions, and will in that way envelop them in a cloud of prejudice. But we saw on the notice-paper this year a notice which would have saved the country a certain sum of money—I think some £20,000 a year—perhaps more. It was to the effect that the expenses of certain Commissions relating to copyholds, enclosure, and tithe which had been charged on the Consolidated Fund should be borne, not by the State, but by the persons who took benefit from the operation of those Commissions. This

motion, which we thought a very rational motion, was made by Mr. Goldney. Mr. Goldney is a man of much intelligence, who sits on the Government side of the House. Thus we had an opportunity, because, Mr. Goldney being the mover of the motion, and not acting in concert with us, it was not possible to cast upon it the discredit of being a party motion. Well, what did we do? We supported Mr. Goldney. And what happened? We carried our motion by one—not by sixty-five, let my friend the working man observe. We carried our motion by one. The noes against the vote were 105—that was in favour of Mr. Goldney's motion; and the ayes, 104 in favour of the Government. So keen were the Government to resist this reduction of expenditure, that, after being thus beaten in a division, some rumour went abroad that one or two members had come into the House that they might, if they divided again, obtain a different issue. They divided again, and again they were beaten by one. In the first division we were 105 to the Government's 104; in the second division we were 106 to the Government's 105. Gentlemen, I need not tell you I was among the 106. But who was among the 104 of the first division and the 105 of the second?—Mr. Charles Turner, member for South Lancashire. Therefore I tell Mr. Turner, with all possible respect, that one of the reasons why we could not operate the reductions we desired was that he was always in his place to oppose them. But there is another form of proceeding. I have given you one specimen because I think one practical specimen is worth a great deal of vague and general statement. I will now go to another point connected with the same important subject. I told our friends at Warrington that there appeared to me to have grown under the present Government a system of what I called, in regard to the public expenditure, making things pleasant all round. That means going from town to town granting what this community wants, granting what that community wants, granting what the other community wants, and leaving out of sight that huge public which unfortunately has not got the voices and the advocates ready always to defend it against these local and particular claims, but of which it is our highest boast that we seek to be the advocates and the champions. I told you that was the system pursued. I told you of a case where a candidate in the Government interest this moment goes to a constituency, and complains that he could not get a Liberal Government to surrender for £2,000 a debt due to Government of £20,000, but that when a Conservative Government came in, then, indeed, the weather had changed greatly in his favour, and he found there was no difficulty at all in arranging the matter. Thereupon he says, "Return me to Parliament, and not a member of the Liberal party." That is the operation which is constantly going on, and that is the operation which I call on you to baffle and defeat. But even since yesterday week I have had the clearest proof, which I will now give, of the truth of what I then said. What I then said was that this Government and its adherents are constantly endeavouring to create electioneering interests by means of local expenditure defrayed out of the public purse. This is my charge. I stated that on Monday week, and what did I hear before the week was out? There came to me a letter from Whitby. Whitby is a town

in the politics of which I take great interest at this moment. Whitby is a seaport on the eastern coast, and the Conservative party in Whitby not having a chance of winning the election by any fair means, or a chance in any way whatever, I believe, in their desperation immediately publish a placard, the purport of which has been sent to me, but not the thing itself. It says, "Who prevented the creation of a harbour of refuge at Whitby? The Liberals. Who wanted to spend four millions in making harbours of refuge on the eastern coast? The Conservatives." That is the sort of thing going on from time to time, aye, and pretty constantly too. (A voice: "We'll stop it.") I am much obliged to you, Sir; and let me add, if it be an allowable mode of speech, you are very much obliged to yourself, because by sending my friend (Mr. Grenfell) and myself to Parliament you will be doing that which is good to the public and that which is good to you as an individual member of the public. Now, I had never said that it was wrong to assist in the foundation of harbours of refuge. Those Conservatives at Whitby ought to have known, if they knew anything about it, that the Government of Lord Palmerston passed through Parliament a Bill for giving judicious assistance instead of wild extravagance and lavish assistance for such purposes. At Newcastle and down to the mouth of the Tyne are probably the most magnificent marine works that were ever undertaken by a local community, and they have never run to such an absurd extreme as to say that under no circumstances will the State recognise the public interest in the formation of local works. It is proper that local works should be properly assisted, but what I do say is this—that it is an unjust plan to stimulate local cupidity to feed upon the public purse; and that that plan, supported and sustained by the Conservative party generally and by many of her Majesty's present Ministers, was resisted by the Government of Lord Palmerston; and that, although the House of Commons adopted it by an address to the Crown, we refused to act on the address of the House of Commons. It is well to get the people of Whitby, who are acting on local interests, to find fault with us because we stood up for the public interest; but what is said by our friends Mr. Turner and Mr. Cross of their friends the Conservatives of Whitby, who are boasting of the expenditure of many millions of money, for the fancied and supposed purpose of doing good to one, or two, or three, or four, or five ports, on the surface of the coast of England at an enormous and almost extravagant charge to the country at large? If you want to be served you must draw the distinction between those who want to serve you and those who don't, and if the electors of South Lancashire and of the country generally are contented to allow this method of expenditure to go on, this Continental system of feeding the desires of classes and portions of the community at the expense of the whole—it is idle for you to satisfy yourselves with vague and general promises, such as everybody can give you by the bushel, of being desirous to promote all reasonable economy. If that is to be the system on which public finance is to be administered, you must be prepared to resign all hopes of remission of taxation, even in good years, and in bad years you must look for a steady augmentation of the income-tax. That is the state of the case as far as it is necessary to

enter into it with respect to the public expenditure. Gentlemen, I am afraid you have of late years suffered from the vicissitudes of trade, and I am told that there are found those who think that trade has suffered in consequence of the Treaty of Commerce with France. If that be so I should not scruple to say that my solemn duty is to prosecute in all matters of trade and commerce the interests of the country at large. There were places—at all events there was one place, the town of Coventry—with regard to which it certainly happened that the French Treaty did arrive at a moment which, in many respects, was a moment of severe pressure. The great cause of the pressure was the stoppage of the American demand in consequence of the civil war in that country. France exports silk goods to the American markets much more largely than we do. France being stopped from sending her goods to America when there was comparatively no demand, did avail herself of the Treaty of Commerce to throw considerable portions of goods on the British markets. But what goods were they? As far as I can understand, they were not the goods in which you deal; you are not producers, like the dealers of Coventry, of light fancy goods. You are not the makers of riband. You are not, like the weavers of Spitalfields, the makers of goods of another class, the richest velvets and highly-figured silks. If I am rightly informed, your trade is rather like the staple trade of Manche-ster, consisting of solid and substantial goods. You are not importers from France, but exporters to the world in general; and if France had the power of competing with you in their markets without any difference in your favour, it is not to the admission of her goods that you owed the distress under which you suffered, but to this, that the door was bolted against you in America through which you had been accustomed to find vent for your productions and the fluctuations of trade. That is a question of argument as I understand it, and scarcely can be discussed as if it were a matter of simple fact. It is not possible to escape the fluctuations of trade, but this it is possible to point out, that the fluctuations of trade are much less under a system of freedom than under a system of monopoly. Of this we have proof in our own history. Many of us are old enough to recollect the crises of trade brought about by trade causes. Before free trade was established, very frequently distress in the manufacturing districts used to follow bad harvests and monetary crises. You have this advantage under the system of freedom, that you can form calculations with better security than when you trusted to artificial restrictions. You know not what causes may arise to bring distress upon you, but it is experience by which in the long run these questions must be determined; and I speak in the hearing of those who are able to judge when I affirm confidently that for the last 20 years, setting aside the cotton famine, which is a matter of a different character—neither free trade nor any other trade could prevent civil wars—but speaking of the ordinary revolutions of trade, the vast extension of our commerce which we have seen throughout the country has been attended, not with an increase of fluctuation, but with an increase of stability not less remarkable than the increase of scale.

I have hardly left myself time to say a few words on the question of the Irish Church, which never can be omitted at an election meeting

like this. I cannot do more than state a summary of the leading propositions on which I have presumed to dwell at other places. I made it my first duty to point out to the people of this county that the substantial question which you have to determine is this, whether you will have one Established Church or none, or whether you will have many Church Establishments in Ireland or none. I think I showed that when the Government proceeded to disclose deliberately its policy for Ireland, that policy did include a regular increase of endowments to the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the establishment of a Roman Catholic University at the expense of the State, and a plain declaration that there was no objection to place the Roman Catholics on nearly the same footing as the Church now established, provided it were done at the public charge, and not by withdrawing the property of the present Church Establishment. Since I spoke Her Majesty's Government has got a new ally in the person of the *Quarterly Review*. Many of you will recollect that about this time last year there was a remarkable paper in that review, entitled "The Conservative Surrender," in which any words used by the Opposition or Liberal party are watery and faint compared with the blasting, withering, and scorching scorn which this writer in the *Review* bestowed on the Government. But now the Conservative surrender itself has surrendered: there is a new article in the *Review* in which having blackened the Government twelve months ago with every epithet the ingenuity of man could extract from the vocabulary to destroy the last rag of its character and the last hope of prosperity and success, the article winds up by saying that now that an election is taking place the result will be the return of a decidedly Conservative majority for the Government. This is the state of things at which we have arrived. I may refer to it because I do not think the judgment of that or any other review, or the judgment of any man or of any united body of men, can contravene the judgment of public opinion, and because this *Quarterly Review* itself has been for so many years one of the loudest and most open-mouthed advocates for paying the Roman Catholics in Ireland, and, of course, the Presbyterian clergy along with them. I will not raise any prejudice against any portion of my fellow-citizens in respect of religion; as long as they are good citizens they ought to be dealt with in the same manner; but this had been the favourite nostrum of that particular political review which has been an organ of great importance, and has spoken in past years for the mass of the Tory party. And, gentlemen, this is your choice. Now, you will observe, on the part of the Government no plan is opposed to our plan; our plan is to remove and put an end to the Establishment, the plan of the Government is to resist our plan and nothing else. The Government of the country has no plan and no policy to offer you. I say it is utterly useless to talk of what is called reforming abuses in the Church of Ireland, and the report of the Commissioners that has lately been presented proves and demonstrates the total inutility of any such scheme. I have ventured also to show this—that under that system which we have maintained for the last 300 years, and especially during the last 100 years, though we have been removing by degrees the pressure of the unjust and even cruel laws by which we kept down for some time the population of Ireland, Protestantism has been dwindling away, not

withstanding that we maintained our Church Establishment in possession of all the ecclesiastical property of the country. Gentlemen, this, in my opinion, is a matter of the utmost gravity, because it appears to me that it is perfectly idle to call those who would put an end to the Establishment in Ireland the adversaries of Protestantism unless it can be shown that the maintenance of the present system has resulted in benefit to Protestantism. We assert the direct contrary, and we support our doctrine not by vague and still less by unmanly exclamations, but by showing, from the public records that are accessible to us at different periods, that the number of Protestants in Ireland relatively to the Roman Catholics steadily diminished for a century or more, and that if that diminution has been stopped within the last few years, it has been stopped owing to the operation of that fearful visitation of Providence, the Irish famine, which decimated the Roman Catholic population, and owing to those social agencies which carry them by hundreds and thousands to the shores of the United States. Gentlemen, every other plea that has been set up is as idle as those pleas. When it is said that the maintenance of the Church Establishment in Ireland mitigates religious animosity, I contend that it inflames religious animosity. There is no country where men of the Irish race are placed side by side with men of the English race, and where they do not get along tolerably except in Ireland. Then it is said that the Roman Catholics would never be satisfied, and would demand the repeal of the Union. Why, gentlemen, that was the reason that was always urged against every moderate and rational plan of Parliamentary reform. It was said, "The people will not be satisfied without universal suffrage and without their having a republic." In point of fact, it is the old principle on which our antagonists systematically ask that you will refuse a request which is reasonable because it may be followed by one that is unreasonable, whereas the principle on which we desire to act is this—grant our requests which are reasonable, and then you will have greater power to resist the requests which are unreasonable. In saying this do not let me be supposed to insinuate, for I do not believe, that there is that disposition on the part of the people of Ireland to make these unreasonable requests. It is in my opinion cruel to say that the people of Ireland, alienated as a large part of them may now be, cannot be mollified, cannot be conciliated, by justice. I know of nothing that warrants us for a moment in treating them as unworthy to be associated with us. We have never thought them unworthy of serving the purpose of our convenience. Lancashire has not been ashamed to profit by their labour. England has not been ashamed to profit by their valour. In the best time of your army one-half of its ranks have been filled by Irishmen, and after thus turning them to account—after thus getting out of them all we can, are we, forsooth, brave and chivalrous England, to cast upon them a look of scorn and say, "Reason and justice have no empire over you. You are the creatures of passion and caprice, and therefore we will deny to you the rights of equality and freedom"? I repudiate with all the force of which I am capable doctrines so unjust to them, so unworthy of yourself, so unworthy of that glorious past of our history on which our Conservative opponents are sometimes fond of dwelling, and so unworthy of the glorious future towards which, as I hope and trust, and believe, with your aid, the Liberal policy will lead us.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN THE

TOWN HALL, ORMSKIRK.

OCTOBER 21st, 1868.

I WILL follow the example of my friend Mr. Hill, and without preface upon matters of form or ceremony, at once proceed to say that I address you as that portion of the South-West Lancashire constituency which perhaps may best, upon the whole, be taken to represent the important agricultural interest of this county, and I do not think that either my hon. and respected friend Mr. Grenfell or myself have any cause to feel abashed in appearing before those of you who are connected with the agricultural interests of the land. There has been, indeed, a class of politicians in England who have been called the farmers' friends, and their great characteristic has been this, that they have always encouraged the farmer to lean upon props that broke under his hand and pierced it, and to call for remedies for his difficulties that were totally unattainable. On the other hand, there has been a class of persons known as the adherents of free trade, who have ever held this language to the agricultural and various other interests, that no one of them had any right to be supported at the expense of the rest of the community. But, at the same time, amidst much unbelief and much mockery, they told the agricultural interests of this country—and I am bound to say that I don't believe the agricultural interest of Lancashire ever wanted much telling—they told the agricultural interests of the country in other parts, where more delusion prevailed, that the true source of their strength, as of the strength of us all, was in the utmost possible freedom of industry and commerce. You know the state of things in this district. You know the markets on which you depend. You know whether the great market of Liverpool, with which the whole of this neighbourhood is so much connected, is or is not now a larger market than it was in times of monopoly and restriction. It would be idle, for

it would seem to argue a supposition on my part of your being ignorant of matters which you know perfectly, if I were to enter into details on these subjects, interesting and profoundly important as they are. In considering matters that are of practical importance to the county ratepayers, the mind of Parliament has of late years been very much turned, and I think very naturally and properly turned, to the question of local expenditure. Now the local expenditure of this country is very considerable, and not only has it always been very considerable, but of late it has been subjected to great and rapid increase. I am by no means prepared to pass any general censure upon the needs and purposes for which the additions have been made to the local expenditure, and so far as my very limited knowledge goes, I do not believe that you have any reason to feel dissatisfied with the spirit in which the local expenditure, and the county rate particularly, is administered in this county, or in this portion of the county; therefore it is by no means in the way of censure that I have in my address to you vented to tell you that I think the time has come when there ought to be a change in the law. Our law with respect to local rates and expenditure is, like many other of our laws, far from being symmetrical or scientific in its construction. In the parishes we all must agree that the ultimate burden of the rates comes upon the landlord. Whether they be parochial rates or borough rates, they will at last find their way to the landlord. However, the sole power of voting you know in the parish vestries is with the ratepayer, and if the landlord happens not to be an occupier, he has no control whatever over the rates. Well, I do not know that there is any very great evil in that, although it appears to be a somewhat anomalous arrangement; but, as regards the county rate, the case is notably inverted, because there, although again the rate ultimately finds its way to the landlord, yet in the county as in the parish, the rate comes in the first instance upon the occupier, who is apt to feel the pinch at a time when the rates are growing, but he would get the first benefit when the rates are diminished. The persons who administer the rates are the magistrates of the county, in the choice of whom he has no share or part whatever. Now, gentlemen, I own that I am of opinion that representation in all these matters of expenditure is a good and sound principle. It is the old principle of our Constitution generally, both Imperial and local. I am friendly to it, not because there is no clamour on the subject, but I am friendly, because it would give a control to the ratepayers in the choice of their representatives, over the expenditure of the rates by those who pay them. It implies no disparagement of those who have exercised their discretion, but I believe the operation would be good, and would tend to enlighten the public mind on some difficult and threatening questions that are coming forward as to the relation between the local and the Imperial expenditures and the expediency of throwing the local rates up on the public treasury.

I now pass from that subject, and will address you upon another—one of great public interest in the present contest—that which relates to the condition of Ireland, and particularly of the Church of Ireland. Often as I have had the honour of addressing my constituents upon this matter,

the subject is by no means exhausted, for here I must own that our opponents endeavour to make up for the want weight in their objections by the number which they make. Therefore it is necessary for us to make draughts on your patience to bury those objections, in the full confidence that the result of these discussions will be the establishment of truth. I wish to say a few words as to the view I take of the attitude held at this time by the different influential bodies, and more especially the different religious bodies, as to the future of this great question. If you look first at the House of Commons, you cannot but see the manner in which it has been treated by the present House of Commons, which seems to many a clear indication of the events that are about to arise; and at this moment I am not addressing you as Liberal politicians—although nearly the whole of those present may probably be Liberal politicians—but I am endeavouring to lodge an appeal to the good sense of my countrymen, independently of political distinctions. The Parliament that is now sitting was elected in a period of extraordinary calm. The moderation of sentiment by which it was characterised in some instances may have been justly thought to proceed from lethargy and torpor, and yet that Parliament, upon receiving the appeal that was made to it, and, in spite of the opposition of the executive Government, has passed at once by large majorities a Bill, I will venture to say, by far the most important of any Bill which upon a constitutional subject has ever been passed by any Opposition in any period of our Parliamentary career. And observe, gentlemen, the mode of opposition that was adopted. The other day there was sent to me, among many documents that reached me, a lecture delivered by a gentleman—I believe a clergyman from the sister island—against the disestablishment of the Irish Church. He had migrated to this country for the purpose of lecturing on that subject, and you will not be surprised to learn that the general colouring of his lecture was warm. We, gentlemen, were pretty smartly dealt with, so far as epithets would go, in the course of the lecture; but the climax of the lecturer's eloquence and of his indignation was arrived at when he came to consider, not the conduct of the assailants, but the conduct of defenders of the Irish Church. He did not scruple to say that if our object was attained, it would be owing, not to the skill or determination with which we had made the assault, but to the half-hearted, feeble, and cowardly manner—these are not my words, gentlemen, they are the words, or the equivalents of the words, of the lecturer—in which what was called the defence was conducted. Now, observe what has happened. The highest authority—the Prime Minister—has said, in a written document, that the consequences of the disestablishment of the Irish Church would be much more formidable to this country than those of a foreign conquest. These are the written words of the present Prime Minister. My Resolutions, therefore, proposed something more formidable than foreign conquest. And how were they opposed? They were met by a motion which was the deliberate result of all the counsels and examinations of the Cabinet, moved by Lord Stanley, to the effect that a question of so much importance had better be postponed till next Parliament. Now, when, on the one hand, you are told by the Government that the matter was more ruinous and destructive than that of foreign conquest, and when the

only remedy they had to offer was the suggestion that this question, more formidable than foreign conquest, should be dealt with early in the next Parliament, instead of at that time, every man of sense may see that there is a half-heartedness, and perhaps an uncertainty of counsel, a want of concord as to what should be the course of action on the part of those who call themselves the defenders of the Irish Church, that would, as my friend the lecturer says, be fatal to any cause on the face of the earth. After speaking of the House of Commons, I must say that I do not look with any dismay to the attitude of the House of Lords upon this question. I may regret, and I do regret very much, the attitude taken by some particular peers, and even by one or two who have been considered and consider themselves as faithful adherents of what they call the old Liberal creed. Lord Overstone, for example, a gentleman of conspicuous skill and talent in the disposal of all monetary questions, has felt constitutional scruples with respect to the Irish Church. Far be it from me to question for one moment the honour or character of any man. If I did so I should only expose myself to most just blame; but this I think it fair to say, that when gentlemen claim your assent in opposing us upon the ground that they adhere to the Liberal creed, I very naturally, who have certainly no better claim to the title of Liberal than other men and perhaps a worse claim—I very naturally look back to those former facts of public life and history in which my name has been associated with Liberal measures: and, as I recollect very well, at the time of the Treaty of Commerce with France, and at the time when we made great onward strides in the commercial and financial policy which has received the approval even of the present Government since they came into office,—at that time Lord Overstone thought it necessary to declare in the House of Lords that he looked upon the manner in which the commercial legislation of this country was conducted as fatal to the credit and prosperity of the country; and therefore if the prophecies of Lord Overstone were so very considerably balked of their effect upon that great occasion, it is excusable in me, at any rate, who was then, as now, the main object of the censure, to console myself a little by looking back to the period, and to the results which have since followed, and to say within my own mind, "As it then was, so it now will be, and the present prophets of ruin and disaster will hereafter be compelled to smile upon the beneficial results of the policy that was then opposed." Gentlemen, I come now to two bodies, which I shall take together—the Nonconformists of this country and the Presbyterians of Scotland. I do not include the Wesleyans, because I will refer to them separately. I think there never was a time when the Nonconformist body of this country and the Presbyterian body in Scotland were more heartily and cordially united than now in the support of the policy which we profess in reference to the Established Church of Ireland. I mention this for the purpose of saying that I feel that the assent and adhesion of these bodies are like an unassassable bulwark and wall built up around us to fortify us, if we wanted fortifications, against those who accuse us of being the enemies, forsooth, of the Protestant religion. They pay a very bad compliment to the instinct of the Nonconformists of England and the shrewd and canny Presbyterians of Scotland, who think that they have not got the power of scenting enmity to Protestantism; for

I apprehend, if Protestantism has determined, devoted, thorough-going uncompromising adherents, these men—seven or eight millions of them—are the very men to whom that title belongs, without any disparagement to the others to whom it also belongs. Now, gentlemen, the Wesleyans likewise, I believe, have assumed an attitude upon this subject on which I may remark with some satisfaction. I will not presume to say that there is the same unanimity among them—the same approach to unanimity—because I think that would be too much to say; but when you recollect how very stiffly the Wesleyans in former times have as a body adhered to the principle of national Church establishments, we must not be amazed if they do not all of them at the same moment open their eyes to the grave and weighty considerations which make it impolitic and unjust to maintain a State Establishment in Ireland. Great progress has been made among them, and my belief is that the majority—probably the great majority—of that very influential body will be found supporting the candidates of the Liberal party at the elections which are now about to be held. I do not feel that I come upon at all more tender ground when from the Nonconformists of this country I pass to the Irish bishops and clergy, for I do not pass to them with the view of expressing any disappointment at the conduct which they have in general pursued; on the contrary, it appears to me—although, of course, there have been exceptions—that we have considerable reason to anticipate that a large portion of that body will be disposed, and disposed while there is yet time, to take the path that wisdom and prudence dictate. A very considerable number of persons—aye, and some very eminent persons—in the Church of Ireland have opened their eyes to the certainty of that which is about to arrive, and, as I believe, are carefully, soberly thinking in what manner they can best meet the crisis. Now, gentlemen, no one can be more determined or uncompromising in the character of the language he uses than I am when I speak of my hostility to the Irish Church as a National Establishment. There are no words too strong, provided they be within the limits of decorum and propriety, to state that hostility. I draw a broad distinction between the Establishment and the Church, but, even as regards the Establishment, this I feel—that we are bound to consult in our mode of procedure the dictates of equity and fairness. And there is one thing, gentlemen, that I will be no party to doing, and that is to destroying the Irish Church Establishment by what I call, or what the doctors would call, the method of depletion—bleeding it to death. I believe that is one of the most cruel kinds of death to which you can put a living creature. I rather think, but I have not time to look at any books, that in the persecutions of the most cruel periods of the Inquisition bleeding to death was one kind of punishment that was invented, and unless I am much mistaken, we have had a great discussion in the newspapers, not many months ago, as to the method of preparing veal for the tables of the rich, in which likewise the process of depletion was adopted, and that is a most cruel method of operation. Gentlemen, if the Irish Church does not take care, that is the method in which she will be dealt with, that is the method in which her friends are disposed to deal with her. Forty years ago the Irish Church had 22 bishops. Now the Irish Church has 12 bishops. The Commissioners recommend

that the Irish Church shall have eight bishops, but the Commissioners' recommendations are not thought strong enough, and it is probable that the Government will improve upon that a little, and they will most likely suggest six, or five, bishops. I ask you, gentlemen, if that is not a process of bleeding to death. Now, that which cheers me and that which pleases me in the attitude of the Irish clergy—and I do not exclude the bishops, at any rate not all of them—is this, that I think that they are beginning to see under the pressure of events the clear distinction that it is in their power to draw between the national Establishment and the spiritual Church, and that this idea is gradually planting and forming itself in their minds, that they will not for the sake of the national Establishment have the spiritual Church bled to death. Consequently, gentlemen, I believe we may look forward to a considerable amount of concurrence on their part in meeting that which I believe is inevitable, whether they concur or not, but that which undoubtedly will be effected with much greater satisfaction to us all in proportion as those who are the immediate subjects of the operation shall be willing to deal with us in an amicable manner for the adjustment and settlement of its details. Gentlemen, I have spoken of the Irish Church, and there are certainly some strong declarations which have been made by eminent men—among others by the present Archbishop of Dublin—against the removal of the Irish national Establishment of religion. His language is very strong. His arguments from astronomy are particularly pointed, and altogether his conclusions are of a somewhat appalling character. Now, I want to quote the dead Archbishop of Dublin against the living Archbishop of Dublin. There was a very fine story of a man who was once famous—the great Duke of Ormond—whose son was dead, who said that he preferred his dead son to any living son on earth. And in this way I will match the dead Archbishop against the living; one. Archbishop Whately, a man whose name was highly respected, did not admit that in the sense of political economy the Irish Church was a burden. I think he was wrong. But, however, that makes his declaration the more remarkable; and this is his declaration taken from his life, published by his daughter:—"The establishment of a Protestant Church in Ireland should be viewed, though no burden, yet as a grievance,—as being an insult." And now for the method of bleeding to death. If you were to cut off three-fourths of the revenue and then three-fourths of the remainder, you would not have advanced one step forward towards conciliation as long as the Protestant Church is called the National Church; and my belief is, gentlemen, that there are many of the clergy in Ireland, and that there are some of the dignified clergy, perhaps some bishops in Ireland, who are not very far from agreeing with that sentiment of Archbishop Whately. Gentlemen, in the same way it is not difficult to say that I look hopefully, though that may appear bold, at the attitude of the English clergy with regard to this matter. It is quite true that in the last Session of Parliament the body of the Bishops of England voted against the Bill which was introduced to stop all new appointments in the Irish Church. There were two exceptions, two marked exceptions, at the least. Some might have been absent from other causes, but there

were two whose absence must have been deliberate. One of them was Dr. Thirlwall, the Bishop of St. David's, one of the most masculine, powerful, and luminous intellects that have for generations been known among the Bishops of England. The other was a bishop of this diocese, the Bishop of Chester—a man who is best described by a monosyllabic epithet—that epithet is "wise"—a man whose wisdom, however, and whose caution, are not greater than his loyalty, and whom the longer he remains among you the more you will esteem and love. It is impossible not to perceive that the attitude of the English clergy in general—though I am thankful to say, not only with many exceptions, but with many marked exceptions, of persons who are among the best and among the ablest of their number—the attitude of the clergy of the Established Church in general—is hostile to this measure, and it is hostile, in my opinion, not because a very large portion of those who oppose it can, to their own minds, justify the existence of the Irish Church Establishment, if it stood alone, but because they apprehend the consequences of its fall upon the Established Church of England. Now, gentlemen, don't let me pretend to say that if the consequences of this measure were to be injurious to the Church of England, I should on that account for one moment feel myself justified in withholding from my fellow-subjects, the people of Ireland, what appeared to me to be their clear rights. That is not so. I am persuaded that such a course as that would indeed, in the long run, be most detrimental to the Church of England; for I believe the existence of the Church of England to be of necessity associated with no injustice, and very sorry indeed should I be to see it placed on a foundation that would involve its passing over to a different character. But I wish to point out to you that this idea—that because the Irish Established Church ought not to exist, therefore the English Established Church is to be done away with—is an idea which may have been honestly prompted and propagated by the fears and prejudices of some, but has no foundation in the solid judgment of the community. I cannot go as far as those who say it is necessary to maintain an Established Church in order to secure the possession of religious liberty. That I look upon as an idle and baseless doctrine. The foundations of religious liberty are laid with perfect certainty and solidity on the principles of universal toleration and equality of religious rights. And this is no mere opinion of mine; for we have only to look across the water, to look at the United States of America, which have no Established Church either connected with the Federal Government, or connected with the State Governments, and where, at the same time, it is entirely undeniable that the most perfect religious liberty is enjoyed. But if there be some who have a prejudice against the United States because they think it is not fair to quote the example of a Republic—though for my part I am always ready to quote the example of any Government whatsoever on points where it can be made available for our instruction—but if that be their feeling, let them with me simply cross the St. Lawrence into Canada. Canada is under a monarchical Government. Canada has no semblance of an Established Church. Canada has passed Acts of Parliament, the very preamble of which recites that it is desirable

to put an end to all semblance of connection between Church and State in that country, and has acted on those principles. Yet, who is there that for one moment will pretend to say that religious liberty does not prevail in Canada? That was a country somewhat resembling, but far less aggravated—somewhat resembling the case of Ireland. Resembling it in this important point—that the members of the Church of England formed a very small proportion of the whole community. And here, gentlemen, I must digress for one moment to revert to what I stated just now about the case of many eminent and excellent clergymen, and even bishops, in connection with the Anglican Church, who are favourable to the policy which we, the Liberal party, recommend. Among them I can't fail to notice one, little known probably to you, for his sphere of action was far distant—Bishop Fulford, of Montreal, the Metropolitan of the Anglican Church in Canada—a gentleman I had the honour to know, and whom no one could know without respecting or revering, or without perceiving that he was a man of most solid and piercing understanding and of most commanding qualities. That gentleman, who died but two months ago, is the bishop under whom the Canadian Church has undergone this process of disestablishment. I had the honour of seeing him in London during the past year, and of hearing his opinion from his own lips. About a fortnight before his death I received a long letter from him stating in detail what had occurred in Canada. He had seen his Church flourish under the operation of disendowment, and had it been in his power to reverse the proceedings nothing would have induced him to make a single retrograde step. Leaving Canada, I ask what is the true state of the case of the Church of England? And here I may observe that at Southport Mr. Cross recently delivered a challenge to me. At another place I mean to remind him that he has carefully avoided a number of challenges that I have given him. In order to set him a good example, and encourage him to walk in the paths of virtue, I will take up his challenge. He wants to know whether I will pledge myself, come what may, to support the Church of England. I shall use my own language in answering that question, but I will answer it so that any intelligent man may be satisfied. I think these two things—first of all, the Church of England cannot be disestablished; and, secondly, I think it ought not to be disestablished; and these two propositions taken together are my answer to the challenge of Mr. Cross. It would not be difficult for me to tell you in a few words why I think it cannot be disestablished. Even the disestablishment of the Church in Ireland, when you look at it in the face, is like what a little man is sometimes called upon to do in the working operations of a big job. I do not think it is beyond our power. I think it is within our power, and I think that, if you will support us, and put Mr. Grenfell and me and 300 or 400 more Liberal members into the House of Commons, we shall be able to manage that. But I own that if I were a member of the Liberation Society, which I am not, or if I agreed with the principles of the Liberation Society, which I do not, I should still look two or three times at the business of disestablishing the Church of England before I set about it. I ventured to point out in the House of Commons that if we attempted to disestablish the Church of England

on the same principles as we ought certainly to proceed in Ireland—that is, with a perfect regard for vested interests, a careful regard for property rights, and for private and recent endowments—the effect of that would be that the Church of England, in commencing her existence as a voluntary society, would, if they took stock, commence with £80,000,000 or £90,000,000 in her pocket. I have met with no one who is prepared to establish a voluntary religious society, with a capital of 80 or 90 millions to start with. But in my opinion the Church of England ought not to be disestablished, and certainly not on account of any argument drawn from the Church of Ireland. It is impossible to conceive a greater contrast than that between the cases of the Church of England and the Church of Ireland. One exception I will make; I grant that they are all alike in this—and I am thankful that they are alike in this—that they both have bishops and clergy who are earnestly devoted to their sacred calling, but in everything regarding their position and situation they are not only unlike, but are directly the opposite. Look to the past of the Church of England. All of us who are Englishmen, who are members of the Church of England, and many who are Non-conformists, know that the history of the Church of England has been bound up with our national history, and that he who is in sympathy with the Church of England finds that sympathy in a great degree upon the honourable and noble recollections connected with it in former times. But what is the case of Ireland? Can the Church of Ireland open up her past? The very object of every champion of the Church of Ireland is to avoid it, and the first words that proceed from his lips are these, "Forget the past." He cannot, he dare not, open the book of history. There is not a doubt that the Church of Ireland has been a part and all along for two or three hundred years, throughout past generations—and I do not speak of the present generation—she has been a part and part in all the worst and most shameful matters of English policy towards Ireland. When the penal laws were passed, where were the Irish bishops? In the House of Lords passing those penal laws, and not only consenting to them, but forming a large portion of that House of Lords when they were adopted. Then remember the tithe war, when the people were shot down for the collection of dues which were indeed legally to be exacted, but which were to go to the ministers of an alien religion. Is it possible you can venture to call up these recollections? No. You are compelled to exclude the whole of the past from the case of the Church of Ireland, in order to be able to argue for it at all. Whereas, in the case of the Church of England, we know very well that she has been the spiritual nurse of ourselves and of our fathers, and of even now a very large proportion of the people of the country, but in former times of a proportion much greater still. The past, then, of the two Churches is totally different. Then, with regard to the future, I cannot help feeling sanguine as to the fortunes of the Church of England, notwithstanding—what I do not at all conceal—all the difficulties arising from the internal divisions, and from scandals that are given and offence that is taken here and there at particular spots in the country. Still, I am quite satisfied that with an instructed and devoted clergy, labouring from generation to generation in their work, as the clergy do, there is every reasonable hope that the

clergy of England will continue to discharge in an increasingly satisfactory manner the responsibilities of their office. I will not trouble you with a repetition of what you may fairly call a demonstration, in the case of the Church of Ireland; but I say that figures fully demonstrate that the number of Protestants in Ireland, notwithstanding the removal of the pressure of the penal laws, has diminished, and has not increased. For the last few years, during which that diminution has been standing still, it has been owing entirely to the fact that, of the Roman Catholic population, a large proportion have been removed from the country, or, unhappily, removed from life, through causes which, we trust, are of a wholly exceptional character. Neither the future nor the past of the Church of England, however, can be for one moment compared with the Church of Ireland. The arguments in favour of Church Establishments are all available for the Church of England. In many portions of this country the Nonconformists would consider, and gladly consider, that the Church of England is the sole spiritual teacher of the people. Nor is it only so, but between the Nonconformists and the Church of England many kindly, social, and religious relations continue to subsist. This is not so in Ireland, where the popular sentiment is altogether against the Church and against everything that belongs to the Church. But look, I say, at the relative strength of the two Establishments. I lay down this proposition, that the weakest part of the Church of England is stronger than the strongest part of the Church of Ireland. The weakest part of the Church of England I am more or less conversant with. It is in Wales. In Wales the Church of England is in a minority; that minority has never been ascertained, but in some limited districts of Wales it is very small, while in other parts of Wales, and particularly where English is spoken, the case approximates more to that of England. But I will assume that the Church of England does not count more than one quarter of the population of Wales, while the Church of Ireland counts quite a quarter of the population of Ulster. Wales, then, may be taken as the weakest part of the Church of England, and Ulster as the strongest part of the Church of Ireland. One-half the proportion, or more than one-half the people of Ulster, are Roman Catholics, and are wholly and entirely set against the Church of Ireland in that province. One-half of the people are wholly opposed to the Establishment, but that is not true of the people of Wales. There is no hostility of that character to the Church Establishment in Wales, and there is nothing to produce painful and irritated feelings, speaking as a general rule, between the clergy and the Nonconformist portion of the population. It is now long since the mass of the Welsh were Church-people. The Dissent of the people is owing to the past neglect of the clergy. But it does not amount to a decided religious hostility. But I will give you another proof: look at the work of education, at that great work which, had it not been for the pressure of other subjects, I should have been glad to have remarked upon concerning its bearing upon the whole country. Now, I ask of the whole English people, who are the class that have for the last 30 years borne the burden and heat of the day in England and even in Wales, with respect to the education of the labouring classes of the community? I say they are the clergy. I do not mean to say

that the schoolmasters have not done their duty, but I mean that the education of the labouring classes has been conducted under the superintendence of the clergy, and with the co-operation of the clergy—aye, and in a considerable degree at the personal cost of the clergy—and it is owing to their devotion and zeal that the children have been collected in the day-schools throughout the country. The overwhelming portion of that work has been in their hands—that is the great moral strength of the Established Church even in Wales. But what is the case in Ulster? The case in Ulster is this—that that fatal antagonism which associates, in the mind of the Irish peasantry, the Establishment of the country with everything that is odious and distasteful to it—that fatal antagonism which affects the tenure of land, which affects the direct administration of religion, has gone also into the province of education; and that when the Whig Government of 1831, aided happily at the time by Lord Derby, endeavoured to introduce into Ireland a more liberal system, which would not be odious and offensive to the Roman Catholic population, the great opponents of the system, who would not allow it to gain one inch of ground in any portion of the country where they could keep it out, were the bishops and the clergy of the Establishment. Gentlemen, it is not for me to condemn them—they were acting according to their consciences, and they had a right to do so; but I may point out the hopelessness of their relation to the masses of the country, even in the part of Ireland where their position is the best. I am comparing it with the hopelessness of the position of the clergy in that part of this kingdom in which the position of the clergy of England is the worst. If you proceed to survey the country at large, that disparity between the two cases, which is strong enough even as between Wales and Ulster, becomes almost ridiculous, at any rate so glaring that it would be a waste of time and no great compliment to your understanding if I were to dilate upon it. Gentlemen, the truth is, the argument of our opponents seems to be, that between the Church Establishment which does its work in the main and has the hope of doing it in much in which it may now fall short—between such a Church Establishment on the one hand, and a Church Establishment on the other hand that does not do its work, and that has not the smallest hope of doing it, there is no perceptible difference whatever. Now that is the argument of our opponents, and they say if you remove the Church Establishment of Ireland, which does not do its work, has not done, and cannot do it, the contagion will be so fatal that you will immediately proceed to remove the Church Establishment of England, which to a very large portion of the community does its work already, and which its friends are sanguine enough to believe will, through the zeal and devotion of its clergy and of its laity, make its usefulness more and more felt from year to year, and from generation to generation. Gentlemen, it is true that affairs of mankind are not always governed by reason. But it is not true, on the other hand, that they are always governed by madness; and you really must, it appears to me, introduce idiocy into the high places of the land before you can say that because you have thought it right to remove the Church which is hostile to the people, you will, therefore, take away a Church which is loved and respected by the people; because you have

though it right to remove a Church Establishment which aggravates every social evil and political difficulty, and which itself will thrive all the better for being so removed, and removed from the hatred of the masses of the people, therefore you shall remove a Church which, on the contrary, is bound up with the sympathies and the recollections of that enormous mass of the people that belong to its communion, and of no small portion of those who do not owe to it a direct spiritual allegiance. Now, gentlemen, these are not inflammatory topics; they may perhaps even be rather heavy—at any rate, they are of a character that make an appeal, not to the passions, but to the understanding. I have not exaggerated, gentlemen, the case of the Church of Ireland. It is not possible to appreciate all the features of that case without entering too largely into the history of the country, but it is summed up in this, that every step and period of that history it has been in conflict with the Irish nation, and has exhibited the consequences of this conflict in a thousand lamentable deformities; for I think Mr. Cross, in a speech which I hold in my hand, declared a night or two ago that "he did not hesitate to say with the deepest regret that he believed the Government of Ireland had been one great mistake for years and years"; that is the mode in which Mr. Cross opens his case. What he pronounces is apparently a total metamorphosis. Well, but these great transformations do not ordinarily occur, and the promise of them is far beyond the power of human strength to fulfil. It is impossible, gentlemen, that the Irish Church Establishment ever can perform the duties attaching to an Establishment of national religion. It is of no advantage to that Establishment to be kept in the enjoyment, or at least in the possession, of emoluments which are given for services they cannot perform. You must look also to the view that is taken of these matters by the people of England; their mind is quite made up, and depend upon it the position of this question is enormously altered, or is, I should say, enormously advanced, by the proceedings of the present year. The proceedings of the British House of Commons in 1868 have constituted a virtual pledge and engagement to the people of Ireland. Your representatives, gentlemen, have taken a very solemn step in your name—a step which may be called rash and hasty, but which has been taken upon long, serious, and grave deliberation. At any rate, the thing is done. The representatives of the people have passed a Bill which aims at putting an end to the abusive system that has existed for centuries in the sister country. That Bill has been taken by the natives of the sister country as a promise of better times and better doings for the future. It has gone forth, as the dove might go forth, bearing the olive-branch of peace. But we are all expiring House of Commons. We, the present House of Commons, have no power to renew our action or to fulfil our engagement. The responsibility now rests with you to say by your conduct at the coming elections whether the fond expectations of Ireland are to be gratified, or whether once more her hopes are to be crushed and disappointed, and another chapter added to the long annals of her woes.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN THE

ROYAL MUSIC HALL, SOUTHPORT.

OCTOBER 21st, 1868.

MR. GASKELL AND GENTLEMEN,—You have been pleased, by a vote most gratifying to my feelings, to acknowledge that in the Parliament which is now about to expire I have endeavoured to serve you faithfully, and have not disappointed those pledges or professions in which at the commencement of the Parliament I solicited your support; but, gentlemen, you have given a practical acknowledgment to the effect which, if possible, is still more gratifying to me and I believe to my hon. friend. You have manifested, as you manifest to-night, a zeal in the cause, and a determination that that zeal shall not evaporate in mere words. You have shown it in the Registration Court, you have shown it in all your proceedings, and we have only to ask you to persevere in the exertions you have made to ensure that success which is alike necessary for the fulfilment of our common aims. Surveying the wide field of politics, we are necessarily compelled to dwell in the main upon those matters which form the subject of present contention, and I trust of early settlement. I for one have endeavoured during this controversy to avoid imputations and indiscriminate onslaught upon the Government. I think nothing can be more worthless than the method of warfare which has been so powerfully exposed by Mr. Grenfell—vague, general imputations, most mischievous in character, unproved by facts and unsupported by evidence, resting entirely on reference to the names of the parties with which invidious feelings and suspicions are associated, and endeavouring to poison or darken the atmosphere of controversy, which it ought to be the desire of every honest man to keep clear of every such imputation and suspicion, in order that we may deal clearly and conclusively with facts.

We have had much controversy during the election upon the subject of finance, a controversy which I did my best to light up by a charge of a specific and definite nature. I was so far successful in the object I have in view that a correspondence began between Mr. Cross, the Conservative candidate for the county, and Her Majesty's Chancellor of the Exchequer, of which we were permitted to see the

results in the public prints. Thereupon I endeavoured to supply Mr. Cross, at a meeting at Warrington last week, with fresh matter for a further correspondence; and my belief is, although I cannot tell you as a matter of fact, that the further correspondence has been actively prosecuted, but that it has been thought better not to put the results in the newspapers. However, our opponents have been active, and I hold in my hand a tidily-printed pamphlet which assures us that one of the most numerous meetings during the contest was held a few nights ago in the Town-hall of Southport. And, gentlemen, considering that the Amphitheatre of Liverpool accommodates 4,000 people, and that we have had the honour of attending other meetings where 3,000 at least have been present, I marvel at the capacity of your Town-hall, which I understand to be a building of more moderate dimensions, but which, under the enchanter's wand of some scribe connected with the electioneering meetings of the other party, has thus been expanded to convey to us an overpowering idea of their activity and power. I read in the London newspapers a day or two ago that in the great metropolis an elderly gentleman presented himself before one of the police-magistrates, and his object was to induce the police-magistrate to interfere to prevent his neighbour's cock from crowing. The police-magistrate sympathised with the feeble nerves of the applicant, and promised to do all he could. Now, it was very natural, I think, for a candidate for South Lancashire to draw a kind of similitude between the circumstance in the London police-court and the circumstances in which we are placed, but I do assure you that I am not in the smallest degree anxious to prevent our neighbour's cock from crowing. My object is not to do as the opposite candidates have done—that is to launch out into vague and undefined statements incapable of being confuted, because incapable of being understood; but to give clear, distinct, and definite propositions upon which the intelligent electors of this county may each for himself deliver an aye or a no with a view to guiding his conduct at the election. Now, I think we have had enough of discussion on the question of expenditure for me to sum up very briefly the main propositions that have been propounded, and in some cases not challenged at all, in other cases made subjects of discussion. It was stated on the part of our opponents that they prepared moderate Estimates in the year 1858. Our answer was, "Those Estimates were the Estimates of the Liberal Government which preceded you; you found them prepared when you came into office, and you added to them as the expenditure of the year." Their next statement was that we proposed high Estimates in the years 1859 and 1860. Our answer was that the high Estimates of 1859, which we found upon entering office in the month of June of that year, were the Estimates of our predecessors, and, therefore, pre-charges which had been already incurred when we came into office. We did not deny that we were responsible along with them because we adopted for the remainder of the year Estimates of that description; but we showed how absurd it was to make that a matter of charge against ourselves. The next charge was that in 1860 those Estimates were increased. We showed, without entering into any question of praise or blame upon the policy of the proceedings, that the Estimates of 1860 were incurred in consequence of the China war, and that war had broken out in the shape of a disaster to the British fleet at the mouth of the Peiho, a few days after we assumed office in London, under instructions which

were distinctly and solely the act of our predecessors. Well, gentlemen, so far for these matters. It has been said, that if it be true that three millions were added to the expenditure in two years, we, says Mr. Turner, ought to have objected to it. Now, gentlemen, as regards the main charges of the country connected with the defensive services, Mr. Turner's political experience should have taught him this, that it is impossible for you to keep the Government in office and at the same time to reduce by votes of the House of Commons those amounts of force which that Government believes to be necessary for the defence of the country. A motion to diminish, for example, the army or the navy proposed by an Administration, is, in effect, a motion for the removal of the Administration. Had we made the motion, we should have made a motion for the removal of the Administration. Was it right that we should have made that motion? Gentlemen, in my opinion it would not be right, because the Government had been engaged in matters more important even than the question of a greater or less expenditure, and it would have been factious on our part, for the sake of any subject which, though important, was yet secondary at the moment in comparison with the great object, to endeavour to impede them in their career. That is, as regards the great services of the country, from which the principal increased charge has resulted. To the increased charge we have objected in our places. We have endeavoured to point out in many particulars how erroneous the policy has been, and the mode of proceeding under which it has been incurred; but as I tell you, if you want to have economy with regard to the navy and army of the country, there is but one way of getting it, and that is by having an economical Government. Well, gentlemen, a challenge has been thrown out to me by Mr. Cross, and it is this. He says that between 1852 and 1866 there was an increase of expenditure from 17 millions to 30 millions, and that during almost all the time Liberal Governments were in office. Now, gentlemen, I am very sorry that Mr. Cross—misled, no doubt, by some of those authorities in London who practised upon his simplicity—is not accurate in this and in several instances in the statements which he makes. I am quite sure this inaccuracy of his is unintentional. There has been a great increase in the expenditure of the country, but the increase of the expenditure for defensive purposes between 1852 and 1866, when we left office, was not 17 to 30 millions, but from 17 millions to between 24 millions and 25 millions—certainly under £25,000,000, or say, in round numbers, £25,000,000. It is not desirable that the little odd sums of £5,000,000 should be laid on when they do not exist: and I observe the same matter again, because Mr. Cross says that Lord Palmerston's Government spent £10,000,000 upon fortifications. Again, Mr. Cross's authorities in London—whose letters, as I have said, we have not seen in the newspapers this time, but it can hardly be the Chancellor of the Exchequer—who misled him. Lord Palmerston never spent £10,000,000 on fortifications. I do not know whether, when Lord Palmerston died, much more than three millions had been spent; but the plan adopted contemplated, and the Act authorised, an expenditure of about £5,000,000, a little more or a little less, or just one-half the sum mentioned by Mr. Cross. But Mr. Cross asked me why there was an increase between 1852 and 1866. Well, gentlemen, I will not now go into the question as to whether every particular of that increase has been justified; but this is a self-govern-

ing country, and you all know that in the interval between 1852 and 1866 there was at times a great sense of insecurity in the public mind, and a great call for increase in the defensive resources of the country. It will be found that these causes concurred in point of time with scientific inventions which led to transformations more than once of the whole of the m munitions of war, and likewise of all the ships that compose our fleet, and it is not the question now whether these things were in all cases precisely right or not. My answer to Mr. Cross is very simple. What was done between 1852 and 1866 was not the act of the Liberal Government in office: it was not even the act of the Tory Opposition, which always wanted them to do more and to spend more; it was in the main, whether rightly or wrongly, the demand of the public opinion of the country, and I tell you plainly that when the public opinion of the country thinks fit to set itself in favour of expenditure there is certainly no other power upon earth which can possibly resist it. That, I hope, is a fair answer to Mr. Cross's challenge, and I will now point out to you the challenges which I have given, and to which no answer whatever has been made. My first challenge was this—that the increase which has arisen from 1866 to 1868 has not been called for by any demands of public opinion; the Ministers have turned the tide from an ebbing to a flowing tide of expenditure, and they have done that by their own act and from their own view, in spite of many remonstrances on points of great importance from the Opposition, and without the slightest pressure from the people at large. Therefore this is an augmentation which is in no sense to be referred to the public opinion of the country; it has been the pure act of the present so-called Conservative Administration. My second challenge was this—that whenever we had a high expenditure setting in under Liberal Governments all the efforts of the Tory Opposition were efforts to make that high expenditure higher, and that position I was not content to state in general terms, but I quoted particular instances in which it had been attempted, in regard to fortifications and with regard to other matters, by the members of the Opposition, availing themselves of what they thought a current of opinion out of doors favourable to expenditure, to force us into greater outlays, and into laying greater burdens on the country. To that challenge no answer has been given, and no notice whatever has been taken of it. When we were told that we never objected to the extravagance of the present Government—I speak now with regard to its civil expenditure—my answer was by an instance that I have given when a motion was made, happily by a member on the Conservative side of the House, which gave us a favourable opportunity, inasmuch as it could not be called a party motion. We voted for that motion and carried it by a majority of one. The Government divided twice upon it, and were twice beaten by one; and among those who voted against us was Mr. Charles Turner, the member for South Lancashire. It does appear to me to show very considerable courage, on the part of those who have done their best, by their implicit obedience to the Government, to keep up that high expenditure when the Opposition endeavoured to reduce it, to throw a challenge in the face of the Opposition, and say, "Why did you not keep it down?" Well, gentlemen, I have also stated this,—that ever since we went out of office the present Government, for what purpose I will not say—I think in some instances in consequence of the disposition that there always is to endeavour to create local political interests for the

purpose of elections at the expense of the public purse—and neither Mr. Cross nor Mr. Turner, nor their informants in London, will venture to question what I say—that from that time to this her Majesty's present Government has been granting, at the solicitation of individuals and classes, sums of the public money that we had steadily refused, and has been increasing in cases which we have granted. Now, gentlemen, I think that all these are tolerably definite charges. I have supported them in each case by one or more particular instances, which I cannot now endeavour to repeat, for the fidelity of our friends below us has already placed them on record. These challenges have not been taken up, and it has not been attempted to answer them, and I say, therefore, gentlemen, as we are now approaching to the close of these electioneering controversies, that the charge of a needless and wanton expenditure is effectually fastened upon the heads of Her Majesty's present Government and of those who supported them in the House of Commons. Now gentlemen, as I have said, I do not make indiscriminate charges against Her Majesty's Government, nor do I say that in every department its conduct of public affairs has been without credit. It is more pleasant to me—though perhaps there are some would not believe it—to notice their good deeds than their bad ones. The conduct of foreign affairs has certainly drawn down from me no censure and no reproach. I believe that Lord Stanley has been actuated in his administration at the Foreign Office by good sense, by quiet moderation, by a love of constitutional freedom in all parts of the world, which we always expect from our Foreign Minister and from every Minister, and, lastly, by a steady regard for the rights of other nations and governments as the only condition on which we can expect our own rights to be respected. I think that the reputation of Lord Stanley as Foreign Minister, is in no danger at all except it be from the extravagant eulogies of men who ascribe to him the powers of magic and enchantment, and who tell us that the peace of Europe has been preserved—the peace for instance, between France and Prussia has been preserved—entirely by the authoritative interposition of Lord Stanley. These eulogies, gentlemen, are extravagant caricatures, and I have not the least doubt that a man of his good sense laughs at them in his sleeve; they are among the expedients which are brought into play at election times, when such things, and a number of other odd things, too, are supposed to pass muster. Gentlemen, I have in the House of Commons had the satisfaction of acknowledging that the whole of the executive detail of the Abyssinian expedition, as far as we are competent to judge of it—which is only in the same degree as you, the public—was conducted by the Government and by the Secretary of State for India in a manner that did credit to his administrative abilities. These things, gentlemen, are pleasant to acknowledge. There is no such a desperate love of the element of strife and contention in the minds of public men as outside observers sometimes suppose. But it is not because some of the departments of the country are unexceptionably conducted that we can afford to overlook those great questions of cardinal policy which go to affect, not the mere routine of affairs, not the subject of a little more or a little less expenditure, but which descend to the very root of our social and our political being; for the question, gentlemen, of the peace, security, and satisfaction of Ireland is a question which touches the unity and the integrity of the Empire.

Now, gentlemen, there are one or two points connected with this great subject of the national Establishment of religion in Ireland which I have yet to open, and which I will endeavour now to bring before you. At a recent meeting I said that I would not discuss, inasmuch as it is not possible to discuss with great advantage all things at once—I stated that I would not discuss one plan that has been proposed for dealing with the religious question in Ireland—viz. the plan of creating a number of Established Churches. Gentlemen, that has been at various times a popular plan, and a plan supported by Government authorities, and it was supported in March last by Her Majesty's Government, but the emphatic expression of the displeasure of this country has driven it into the shade. But as we never have had from the members of the Government any disclaimer upon principle of that which they adopted and declared as a corner-stone of their policy for Ireland when Mr. Disraeli became First Minister, it is quite possible that, under favourable circumstances, it may be reproduced. So I think it desirable that we should look for a moment at the merits of that plan. The object we have in view is, as my friend Mr. Grenfell has said, to exclude from this debate all considerations of theological contention. These subjects are not to be idly sneered at. They are of the deepest importance to the happiness of man, and they touch the inmost feelings; but it is fatal to the hopes of satisfactory political discussion if we allow these considerations to come between us and the fulfilment of the principle of civil justice, and that is the plain answer to those who, because the Roman Catholics are in a minority in England, and because their religion is considerably different from that which prevails with the majority, endeavour by creating a prejudice and outcry against them to prejudice plans which have no connection whatever with the merits or demerits of their religion, but are founded solely on the recognition of their religious equality. I ventured to say the other day in another place that the Church of England could not be disestablished, and that it ought not to be disestablished—two propositions perfectly distinct from one another; and so I venture to say that the plan of all endowment, the plan of meeting the difficulty in Ireland by multiplying the number of churches in that country by extending the narrow grant to Presbyterians into a sufficient endowment, and by granting a small endowment to the Roman Catholics—I say that this plan, which was shadowed by the Government in March, is a plan which cannot be carried into execution, and ought not to be carried into execution. You know that pretty well yourselves; you know that the Episcopalians of England, the Presbyterians of Scotland, and the Roman Catholics of Ireland are all opposed to it, and in a self-governed country it is difficult matter to pass a law to which all the three countries are opposed; but I am bound to say that, although I am not prepared to censure Mr. Pitt and other great men who looked with favour upon a plan of this kind, I think the Roman Catholics in objecting to the plan have judged wisely as well as for their own interests. I do not mean for the narrow and sectarian interests of their religion; I mean for the establishment of peace and goodwill between them and their neighbours, and between them and the State. If large sums were given for the endowment of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland there would be an expectation that in return for that endowment conces-

sions should be made by the Roman Catholics and a power of interference allowed by the British Government in the internal affairs of that Church, which would be a perpetual source of dissension; and because I think that the existence of such subjects of discord would be equally injurious and mischievous to them and us, and alike fatal to the purpose we have in view of establishing harmony in Ireland, I am of opinion that the plan of all endowment, which the Government choose as the proper method of dealing with the Irish Church, while it cannot be adopted is a plan which ought not to be adopted. There are those who say that the plan never was intended by the Government. I am going to read a paragraph from a newspaper published in Rome—and no newspaper is published in Rome without the authority and approval of the Government of that city. I wish to show the view taken by that Government of the declaration of the British Ministry. The newspaper is the *Roman Observer* of March, 1868, and the article in question is a review of the debate on Mr. Maguire's motion. It says:—"Mr. Disraeli recognised the necessity of endowing the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, and that it might not be supposed that he wished to give stipends to the Catholic priests he declared that he rejected the idea of what is commonly called paying the clergy. He declared accordingly that the Catholics should have the right of property in Ireland as elsewhere. If together with the Catholic Church Mr. Disraeli wishes that the Anglican Church should have property, we must not forget that he is the Minister of a Protestant Government." That was the attitude of the Government now in power, which has raised the premature cry of "No Property," which is the promoter of the cry of "Defender of Royal Supremacy," and the proclaimer of all kinds of mischief from the policy of freedom and equality. That was the aspect of the policy of the Government in March last, and you may rely upon it that the person who wrote that paragraph did not do so from his own opinion, but from inspiration conveyed through other channels and from higher quarters. So much, gentlemen, for the subject of what I call the all-endowment system. But one of the most popular charges against us is that our policy is addressed to the encouragement of Ultramontanism—a long word, gentlemen, a difficult word, a word of which the significance has caused a good deal of trouble to the world in former times, and may yet again. It is not for us, I think, in this place to pronounce any opinion at all upon religious questions affecting the internal condition of the Roman Catholic Church. But the question of Ultramontanism is partly religious and partly political. I look at the political part of it exclusively. In that light—as I understand it—I may be wrong, and I have no authority to speak—it is a system of opinions which includes a great number of political and civil questions that are the very opposite of those on which we act in these matters. In this country we say that religious opinions ought not to be made the ground of disabilities for civil office. Ultramontanism, if I understand the matter aright, says that they ought to be made such a ground. In this country we think that the circulation of opinion should be free. Ultramontanism, if I understand it, is a system which states that the circulation of opinion should not be free. And so on through a long string of propositions, nearly the whole of which were treated of some few years ago in two documents emanating from the Roman Court, not referring to matters of faith or belief, or I would not touch them here

if they did. I do not look upon them in that point of view, but as containing undoubtably an enunciation of opinions of which I will only say that they are entirely opposed to the practice of this country. The charge against us is that we are favourable to these Ultramontane opinions, and that we are about to promote them. My answer is double. In the first place, I say if you want to favour Ultramontanism among Roman Catholics—among the hundreds of thousands of Roman Catholics in this country, and among the millions of Roman Catholics in Ireland—I will give you a recipe to do it, and it is this: treat them with civil injustice; compel them to view themselves, not as members of this great and noble country, having common interests and brotherly feelings with you, but as members of a confederation apart, as men who are oppressed or disconcerned on account of their religion, and who, being men of honour and spirit, on that account cling to it or cling to everything that comes to them in its name with the greatest fondness and tenacity. That, gentlemen, in my humble opinion, is the true way to promote Ultramontane opinions. But again, if you will allow me, I am going to give you another short passage from the same source. The *Roman Observer* of March, 1868, reviewing the debate in the House of Commons on the motion of Mr. Maguire, gives an opinion expressed in Rome under authority. Referring to the two documents that I have already mentioned to you, and which are known in Rome and in the Roman Catholic community as the *Syllabus* and *Encyclical Letter*, the writer says:—

"Among the speeches pronounced on this occasion is conspicuous that of the First Minister, Mr. Disraeli, who pronounced so many noble truths in defence of the proposition set forth in the *Syllabus* and *Encyclical* of Pius the Ninth as should raise a blush on the faces of those pygmies in Italy and elsewhere who pretend to be great men while they resist decisions of the Pope, which have been justified, acknowledged, and proclaimed even by a heretic of the highest genius and the widest reputation, such as the First Minister, Mr. Disraeli."

Now, gentlemen, I am going to put to you a question—Suppose that out of that paragraph you strike the words, "First Minister, Mr. Disraeli," and put "Opposition speaker, Mr. Gladstone," and suppose the Roman newspaper under the Pope's authority had written of me that I had pronounced so many noble truths in defence of the *Encyclical* and of the *Syllabus* as to make those pygmies blush, who refused to admit truths acknowledged by a heretic like myself—suppose there had been such a paper, I ask you whether it would not have been placarded on every wall in this country as a damning demonstration of the Popish intentions of myself and the Liberal party? Oh, gentlemen, what a plume that would have been for Mr. Turner! Why, it would have been a stock-in-trade enough to carry the Conservatives through the whole election; and now I should like to know what they will say to it when they meet next in the Town-hall at Southport or elsewhere. What will they say of the *Encyclical* and the *Syllabus*? Ah! let there be equal dealings in these matters. Suspicions are thrown out against us—daringly thrown out—with not a jot or tittle of evidence to back them, and when you hear those suspicions, or find them in circulation, refer gentlemen to the reports which will be made to-night of the passage I have just read to you, and ask Mr. Turner and Mr. Cross for their explanation. Gentlemen, Mr. Turner and Mr. Cross

are to be felt for in different degrees; Mr. Cross is a fortunate man, because, unlike the Church of Ireland, he has no past for which to be called to account. Mr. Turner is an unfortunate man, because he has got to explain that which never can be explained—namely, that having been elected as an anti-Reformer in 1865, he steadily joined in every measure to resist Reform in 1866, and then in 1867, that his own friends might be kept in office, gave his voice in favour of a plan agreeable indeed to the views which prevail among us and within these walls, in its main principles as it was ultimately shaped, but most disagreeable to the professions, and tastes, and inclinations of himself and his party. Now, gentlemen, I am going to do a very bold thing: I am going to suggest to Mr. Turner the material for a speech. It is taking a great liberty, but it refers entirely to a department which Mr. Turner is loth to open—namely, that of the past, and it is not a speech of my own invention, or I would not venture to suggest it to him, but it is a speech which, comprised in one sentence, is stated to have been made by a gentleman of the name of Baggallay—I believe, a distinguished lawyer, who, for his merits, has been made Solicitor-General by the present Government, and who has presented himself for re-election, I believe, to his constituents at Hereford. At any rate, what I wish to call your attention to is a sentence which, as far as I can judge, would suit Mr. Turner to a T. Mr. Baggallay says, "Gentlemen, I am going to make it plain to all. I came here in 1865 and told you I would do one thing, and I have been and done another." Now, in my opinion it is impossible to nourish resentment against men who use plainness of speech; it makes very short scores; it shows the people of England that no attempt is to be made to hoodwink or delude them, and on this account I am serious when I say, and I think you must be of the same opinion, that it would be greatly to the permanent interests of the Conservative party and of Mr. Turner, if he would simply take into his own mouth and publish the short speech of Mr. Baggallay. But, gentlemen, I go on from our opponents to the last topic upon which I shall trouble you, and that is the present condition of Ireland, with regard to which though I said I had entirely done with our opponents personally, I will say I see in this speech that the same gross delusion, the same thick darkness, if without disrespect I may so speak, overspreads the minds of Mr. Cross and Mr. Turner as has been said in former years to overspread the whole counsels of the Tory party with respect to Ireland. Now, gentlemen, in my opinion, our friends of the Conservative party entirely and absolutely misunderstood the condition of that country. Mr. Cross speaks of it as having undergone very great improvement. He states that things have been very bad in Ireland in former times, but he thinks now they are so much better, and, to use his expression, so much good has been done in Ireland, that the result, as he says, has been comparative happiness; and his audience, I was almost going to say his victim, greeted that statement with cheers; and it is their opinion that Ireland is now in a state of comparative happiness. It is only fair to them to say that they are echoing the opinion pronounced by the Prime Minister at a civic festival of the City of London given three months ago. Now, if that is their opinion of the state of Ireland, what I say is that our Conservative friends are in a deep sleep. I do not mean as to electioneering manœuvres. Unfortunately, sometimes people walk in their sleep, and I

consider that their electioneering activity is that of men walking in their sleep. The electioneering activity refers to the question of the poll; the sleep in which they are involved means a total incapacity to discern the signs of the times and the real causes of danger to the empire. Ireland we are told is in a state of comparative happiness at a time when for three years, in order to maintain the peace of the country, it has been found necessary to suspend the elementary guarantees of personal freedom. That is the doctrine of our opponents, and I am justified in saying they are asleep; and I will tell you more: the most friendly service you could do them is to give them a good, hard, and rough shake to awake them. Some hope I have that that operation will be performed at the time of the election; and really I feel that it would be not less for their profit than for ours. I had the honour of addressing you in this hall some ten or eleven months ago, and then told you before the meeting of Parliament, the view that I could not but take of the condition of Ireland and the Fenian manifestations; and then I signified to you the opinion that the time had in my view arrived when we must set about the establishment of religious equality in Ireland. Now, what is the doctrine of our opponents? Mr. Cross says it is true that the Habeas Corpus Act has been suspended, but not as against the people of Ireland. He says, "I deny that the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended in Ireland against Irish people." Well, the *ve* is the city of Rome, and the feeling of the bulk of the Italian people is, that the inhabitants of that city are not well affected to the civil Government of the Papacy. I speak without touching upon any of the controversies in the matter, because I am using it merely for the purposes of illustration, to endeavour to show truly how this matter stands. Well, but when the volunteers of Garibaldi invaded the Roman States the Roman people did not rise, and the explanation given was this:—They were too prudent, and they dared not; they knew that an overwhelming force would be used to put them down; and they determined not to shed their blood to no purpose. I speak of that as the explanation of what has occurred among us in this country. Apply that to the case of Ireland. The people of Ireland have not risen; the people of Ireland are divided in sentiment, and so probably are the people of Rome; but this we know, and upon the highest authority, that a large portion of the Irish people are either hostile in their relation or neutral to the British Throne and Government. We know that upon the authority of the Ministers of the Crown; we know it by the manifestations that occur from time to time in Ireland when criminals are tried for political offences; we know it by the processions which were held in Ireland and in London after the execution of, I think, three Fenian offenders who had murdered the policeman Brett. We know it by every kind of symptom that can meet the eye of intelligent men; and yet still our friends—for I call our opponents also our friends except in the political sense—will cling to their delusion that Ireland is thoroughly British in feeling, sensible of the countless blessings which they derive from our inviolable Constitution, and that it is only the troublesome agency of the United States of America which renders it necessary to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act. Now, gentlemen, I want to go to that point, because this is a subject of vital importance, on which I am certain you will not grudge me a very few moments. The language which is held by our opponents is this—Fenianism is a plant of foreign growth. Ireland is not disaffected,

though Lord Mayo stated that as regarded a large portion of the population it was; but that can't be admitted during the elections. Fenianism is a foreign importation into Ireland, and the true origin of the hotbed of Fenianism is in America. Now, gentlemen, isn't it a most extraordinary thing that Irishmen should become more hostile to their own country in consequence of leaving it than they were when they dwelt in it? Did you ever hear of such a case? Did you ever hear of men who lived contentedly under a Government, and then, because they happened to go under another Government, become in their own breasts hostile to the Government they had left? No such case ever was known or heard of. Now, gentlemen, I want you to understand what is the view that the Americans take of Fenianism; it is quite time that you should hear them upon that subject. Our opponents are under the gross delusion of believing that America has a love for this pestilential plant, and fondles and rears it with the utmost care in order to make it an instrument of annoyance to us. That is their creed. I tell you, on the contrary, that Fenianism is a plant of Irish growth, and the only reason why it is suppressed and smoulders in Ireland and is loud and noisy in America is that it is suppressed in Ireland through the fear of an overwhelming power, and that when the shores of America are reached the fear of that overwhelming power has ceased. This is just like what happens in many cases when there is a fire in a mine: they close the mine to stop it, and the fire is not observed; but if the air be let in the fire blazes up. The Fenianism of Ireland is the fire smouldering in the mine; the Fenianism of America is the fire, with an abundant supply of fresh air. And, moreover, it is most unjust to the Americans to accuse them of loving, and fondling, and caressing this evil growth, with which it is we who annoy them. I hold in my hand a letter which is well worth your hearing. I am not sure that I should be justified in mentioning the writer's name, simply because it is a private letter sent from America and supplied to me by a dignitary of the Church of England, who is entirely of our mind with regard to the Church of Ireland, but it expresses opinions which do not require a name to authenticate them, and I am sure when you know that it is an American's view of the Fenian question you will say that the two or three minutes occupied in reading it are the most important portion of time I have spent since I began. I am not quite certain as to the date of the letter, but it is a recent one, having come within the last six months. The writer says:—

"The Irish come to our country by millions, and bring with them the hate of the British Government so intense that to gratify it they would gladly die. Every tried friend of Great Britain ardently desires that some wise and sufficient measures may be devised to conciliate the Irish people and make them friends of the Government by which at present they think themselves so deeply injured. I wish English statesmen could see this question in the light in which we regard it from our stand-point. There is nothing so important to our country, as well as yours, as the maintenance of peace between them, and even more than that—the most kindly relations. The Irish already constitute a most influential portion of our voting population, determining to a very large extent the policy of our Government. This population is led and controlled almost absolutely by able and unscrupulous politicians who are themselves well known among

us as being unfriendly to your country; these men can at any moment command the enthusiastic devotion of the entire Irish population among us by a promise to inaugurate a policy of unfriendliness to Great Britain. I am sure I speak the opinions of all the better part of our people when I say that we wish to see your country prosperous and strong and her people happy. At present we think Ireland adds very little to the power of your nation, but regard it as an element of weakness in the event of a war with any strong naval and military people. We are sure that the proposed mode of dealing with the Irish Church would go far to placate the Irish people, and, followed by other wise measures of conciliation, would go far to reconcile the Irish to British rule. There is no more ardent Protestant than I am—that we are whose views I have endeavoured to present—but we feel confident that the Irish in this country, as well as in yours, will always be hostile to your Government, and will devise mischief to it in every possible way, without the adoption of some measures which they think justice to Ireland demands. That God may guide you and all your countrymen in the course best adapted to promote the interest of your nation and the happiness of your people, is my sincere wish."

Now, gentlemen, I don't hesitate to say that that letter presents the matter from the true point of view. The people of America wish to stand well with us, but we discharge upon their shores every year 100,000—perhaps more—of men into whose breasts we ourselves have instilled a deep hatred of ourselves; and these men, finding themselves in a country abounding in resources and in power, and carrying with them the passionate recollections with which they have set out from their native shores, naturally enough seek to turn the energies of America into channels hostile to us. And what is our miserable policy? To say that these feelings are of American growth. It is flying, gentlemen, in the face of facts; it is closing our eyes against the noonday. These passions are passions born and fostered in Ireland, and they are the unhappy children of our own misrule, and until we can by some means awaken the minds of the English people to the perception of these great essential facts, bearing as they do upon all the permanent prospects of peace and of security for this empire, we never can stand in the face of the world acquitted by the general opinion of civilised mankind of gross injustice; nor can we have that firm, immovable position which we ought to have for our own defence in times of danger as a strong, because a united, people. Now, gentlemen, I endeavour in these words feebly to present to you the great work which we have in hand in this election. Is it not idle, in the face of facts like these, to talk of being governed by party motives and the desire of office? It is not difficult to meet such reproaches with silence on the part of those who know they do not deserve them; but it is difficult with patience to think that it is by means of instruments and pleas like these that men are content to practise on themselves the grossest self-delusion, to encourage the Government of this great and noble empire in a course of injustice and wrong. Gentlemen, we invoke you in the mass;—or individually, every elector among you—if the interests that I have endeavoured to place before you really touch you as British citizens; if you really prize and cherish that which has been to us all a dear and a sacred name, we invoke you to assist us in an enterprise which, however it may be blackened by calumny, or more frequently by ignorance—we believe, and I think I may say we know, to be the enterprise of justice and of truth.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN

HENGLER'S CIRCUS, WIGAN.

OCTOBER 23RD, 1868.

MR. LANCASTER AND GENTLEMEN,—I avail myself with the utmost promptitude and pleasure of the introduction which you have been pleased to give me, and I will endeavour to state my views on some points of interest to the vast assemblage which I have the honour to witness before me, with only this preliminary observation, that as the constituency of the county has greatly favoured me with like opportunities at other places of importance, I shall endeavour to avoid, as far as is in my power, repeating the observations which it has been my duty to offer to other portions of the electoral body, and you will I trust, accept my apology, growing out of the necessity of the case, if I rather endeavour to convey to you with clearness and fairness, as much as is in my power, one or two points of great importance, than attempt to travel over the whole wide field of the political interests of the country at large. There are two subjects connected with and forming branches of the great question of the Irish Church—which, as you know, absorbs at this time, far beyond every other single topic, the general interest of the country—there are two branches of this great question on which I have not said a word, but with respect to which, any attempt to discuss the question in the face of the country would be incompatible unless some endeavours were made to deal with them. One of the allegations that are often made by the friends, or, at the least, those who call themselves, and I have no doubt believe themselves, the friends of the Irish Church, is this,—that it operates with great power in the mitigation of religious animosities. Well now, gentlemen, I meet that statement with one directly opposite, and I hold and contend that the effect partly of the Established Irish Church, and partly of the general system of ascendancy of which that Irish Church is an important and a leading

part, has been not to mitigate but to inflame religious animosity in that particular country to a point higher and hotter than it has reached probably in any country in the world—certainly in any portion of Her Majesty's wide and almost boundless dominions. I will endeavour to supply you with an illustration of what I have said, and I begin with an anecdote from the House of Commons. In the course of last Session, a highly respected friend of mine, an Irish representative, Mr. Cogan, gave notice that he would ask from the Government an explanation with respect to a speech that had been delivered in Ireland by a gentleman whom I need not name, connected with Trinity College, Dublin, and which he considered to be a speech directly tending to a breach of the peace; and, undoubtedly, in that speech the speaker did appear to contemplate pretty distinctly the use of force as a means of resisting any measures that Parliament might adopt with a view to the destruction of the Protestant ascendancy. That recital by Mr. Cogan appeared to produce a considerable impression, for, in point of fact, I defy you, gentlemen, in the whole length and breadth of England—unless it be within the charmed circle occupied by a certain Murphy, who I believe is now somewhere in these parts, and whose proceedings we really cannot recognise as belonging at all to the character which marks the laws of English debate—I defy you to find from ordinary English debate and controversy, though we naturally are free in our language, anything to compare to the passage to which I now refer. But a great impression was produced upon the opposite side. There was considerable alarm from the obviously inflammatory, if not to say seditious, tendency of the speech of the gentleman connected with Trinity College, Dublin. But what was the mode of defence adopted? Not to explain the speech, not to retract the speech. The mode of defence adopted was this:—Another gentleman on the other side of the House went and found another speech just as inflammatory from the other side of the question, and he came down and read that violent, inflammatory, and seditious language on the other side of the question amid the triumphant acclamations of the supporters of the Government. They did not in the least degree think it necessary to show that their man had not used language tending to a breach of the peace; it was quite enough for them to show that similar language had been used on the other side. But this is not the way, I am thankful to say, in which discussion on political measures is conducted in this country. I hold in my hand a published pamphlet relating to the parishes in the North of Ireland; I have never seen a contradiction of the statements it contains, and I think they are such as will put you in a position to judge whether we are right in contending that religious animosity is inflamed, and not mitigated, by the existence of the Established Church in Ireland and by the system with which that Church is connected. You will all remember that the present settlement in Ireland was reached at a period of revolution, not as in England, peacefully, happily, and by the spontaneous action of the mind of a free people, but in the manner of an English conquest over the inferior forces of Ireland. The battles of William III. and his forces put down what was undoubtedly the sense and will of the mass of the Irish people. I am finding no fault with that at this moment—it is a question of historical discussion; but I think you will agree with me that after a civil war of that nature was over, it was

an odious and dreadful thing to keep alive by periodical processions, by constant party dinners and celebrations, and by flags floated in the face of the general population of Ireland, the memory of bloodshed by which the will and voice of the majority had been put down. You may remember that for a great length of time we did commemorate in this country by a religious celebration, the anniversary of what was called the Gunpowder Treason. That was a totally different matter; that was not a question of civil war fought out in the open field between two great parties in the country. It was a question of returning annual thanks to the Almighty for the deliverance of the Legislature from a terrible execrable plot aimed at its destruction. And yet there is no man who does not feel that when we ceased a few years ago to maintain the usage for that annual celebration we had done an act of justice and kindness to our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen. But in Ireland, where it is a question of civil war, of which the Orange flag is the emblem, the wretched memory of former feuds is kept up year by year, by men banded together for the purpose—sincere men, conscientious men, I doubt not, but misguided men. But how misguided? They are misguided, to a great extent, by that which gives countenance to a system of ascendancy, keeping them in the blindness of delusion under which they are labouring. But where do you suppose there is a favourable receptacle for the Orange flag? It is in the House and Temple of God. In the North of Ireland, within the very walls where men meet to lay aside their passions, and confess their sins, and give thanks for their mercies; even there this unhappy flag is hung. The pamphlet to which I refer is written by the Rev. John Robert Greer, incumbent of Kilderton, in the diocese of Armagh. He speaks as a man who was on the best terms with his parishioners until he differed from them on the matter of the Orange flag. He does not say that they did a thing without example, but, on the contrary, he says that Kilderton Church was the only church in his neighbourhood where the law had not been previously defied. He goes on to say, "You as representatives of the principal families, did, against my express wishes and request, and well knowing my determination that I would not go with the multitude to do evil by officiating in my church while such emblems were upon it, you did secretly, and in the dead of night, desecrate my church and profane its precincts by indulging there in strong drink and revelry, while attaching to its very walls, and even actually over the Lord's Table, these unholy emblems of strife." And he proceeds to say that, in consequence of the resistance thus offered to the will of his parishioners, a large number determined no longer to attend on his ministry as a clergyman. We are tempted to cry "Shame," but let us pass. I want to know if there is not something to be said for these men. When they see that the laws are violated, when the wealthy few are set up to remind them of wealth and civil superiority, do not things of this kind excuse or account for proceedings such as I have detailed? and are we not in some degree responsible for exhibitions and manifestations of this kind so long as we continue to maintain the system of ascendancy and the Established Church in Ireland? But I must give you another proof of the manner in which the Irish Church tends to mitigate religious animosities. Gentlemen, I am now about to quote some words used in the debate in the House of

Lords of the Session just expired, and used, according to report in the public journals, and, therefore, I presume substantially correct, by a person of the highest eminence—the present Primate of Ireland. He was discussing the Bill called the Suspensory Bill, which, as you are aware, was passed by the House of Commons during the last Session, but which did not succeed in passing the House of Lords. Now, this was the view which he gave of the state of matters in Ireland, he being a prelate at the head of this Church, whose office and whose effect, we are told, it is to mitigate religious animosity,—and I must say, in justice to him, being, I believe, also a good and a kind, as well as an earnest man;—but this is his view of the condition of Ireland and of the Protestants and Roman Catholics of Ireland respectively:—“Don’t imagine that if you overthrow the Irish Established Church there will not be, as there was in earlier days, a very extensive emigration of Protestants, comprising many of the best, the soundest, the most loyal, and most industrious of her Majesty’s Irish subjects. You will put before the Irish Protestants the choice between apostasy and expatriation, and every man among them who has money or position when he sees his Church go will leave the country. If you do that, you will find Ireland so difficult to manage that you will have to depend on the gibbet and the sword.” Now, gentlemen, you have heard these words probably with some astonishment. I look upon them as the too direct and legitimate fruit, not of personal intemperance—for I don’t believe the speaker is personally intemperate—but of a bad and inveterate system which has been maintained up to the present day, and which you, together with the rest of the electors of this country, have now to determine upon, either that you will still maintain it, or that you will bring it to the ground. I now pass on from the point to which I referred. I think I have given you some evidence that the allegation that the Irish Church tends to mitigate religious animosity is a statement not only untrue, but ludicrous, when the view taken by the head of the Protestant Church of that country is that if the Protestants were to leave it the means of governing the Roman Catholic population would simply be by the gibbet and the sword. There is another charge that is made, and a plausible charge, which I beg you to consider with me for a little. It is this: we are told that the Irish never will be satisfied. We are told that they invent one demand after another, and that any concession that is made to them only makes them keener to agitate for the next. Well, gentlemen, there is some truth in the statement that the concessions hitherto made have made the Irish people agitate more keenly for what they thought still remained due to them; and I ask of any of you who might happen to be a creditor what you would do if you had a solvent debtor, and if your solvent debtor, having full means to pay you the whole of your just claims, attempted to put it off from time to time by 2s. or 3s. in the pound. You might take the first 3s. if you could do no better, but you would very soon demand another, and when you had got six, perhaps you would try to have ten, and when you had ten you would begin to think of 15. You would say, “It is of will;” and that is what Ireland has a right to say to England, and Ireland is entitled, in my judgment, to ask of England, not 5s., nor 10s., nor 15s., but 20s. in the pound. Now, gentlemen, our opponents would have you believe that this matter of religious equality in Ireland is a new subject

invented for the purpose of the present hour, and what they say is, First of all, we began by repealing the penal laws; then they wanted the elective franchise, and they got it; then they wanted to come into Parliament, and they got it; and now they are not satisfied with anything but the destruction of the Established Church and the attainment of religious equality; and after that they will demand something else more formidable. This is no novel demand at all, and no novel policy. I beg you to attend carefully to that which I am about to say. The statesmen of two generations ago, with Mr. Pitt at their head, when they were parties to investing the Roman Catholics with a portion of their political rights in the shape of the elective franchise, knew perfectly well what they were doing; and knew perfectly well that that must be followed, and ought to be followed, by their admission into Parliament, and likewise knew that it must be followed by the concession of religious equality. The difference is this, and the only difference is this. At that period the intention undoubtedly was to grant religious equality, not by disestablishing the Church established, but by creating Roman Catholic and Presbyterian Churches by its side. There is no doubt at all about that. The mode of attaining the end was different, the end itself was the same; and I affirm that the Irish Roman Catholics, in now demanding religious equality, are making a demand, the fairness and equity of which have been allowed by the greatest statesmen who dealt with the affairs of Ireland 50, 60, and 70 years ago. But do not let that, inasmuch as it is important, rest on my mere dictum. I want to give you an answer to make to those who assert that the project of establishing religious equality is a novel invention. Mr. Pitt himself, in proposing the Act of Union, used these words:—“When the conduct of the Catholics should be such as to make it safe for the Government to admit them to a participation of the privileges granted to those of the Established Church”—and that related to the endowment of their Church and of their clergy—“and when the temper of the times should be favourable to such a measure, when those events should take place, it was obvious that such a question might be agitated in a united Imperial Parliament with much greater safety than it could be in a separate Legislature.” But it does not depend alone upon the declaration of Mr. Pitt. Lord Castlereagh, some 20 years afterwards, said that the reason why the policy of England with respect to Ireland had failed, was because she had chosen to adopt nothing but a series of half measures. As to the mode of attaining religious equality, the views of the Roman Catholics themselves, and the views of the people of this country also, are different now from what they then were. It is quite possible, too, that at that time there might have been no objection to establishing these three Churches, the one by the side of the other, in Ireland; but now, on the contrary, we know that the voice of the three kingdoms is against that method of procedure. But what I want you to observe is that the Roman Catholics’ claim to religious equality is no new claim; it was recognised by Mr. Pitt, and by Lord Castlereagh too, shortly after the Union, and recognised as a necessary part of the policy on which that Union was based. There are many other points connected with the Irish Church with which I will not attempt to detain you, as I have fully explained myself at other places. I have pointed out that those persons are wrong who think that, because we take away a bad Church Establishment in Ireland, we therefore desire to take away the

good Church Establishment in England. The Church of England, like the Church of Ireland, must be judged by its works; and so long as, in the judgment of the bulk of the people of this country, the Church of England can abide, she has no fears to entertain for herself from allowing justice to be done in the sister country. Your real choice is between having no Establishment and several Church Establishments. You cannot maintain the Church which now exists and maintain it alone. If you choose—which you do not choose—to adopt the policy of creating a number of religious establishments in Ireland for all the denominations by which that country is peopled, you may do so. But the idea of maintaining the present Establishment alone is wholly out of the question. We may dismiss the plea that the Establishment is maintained for the sake of Protestantism, because we have shown that Protestantism has dwindled under its action. We have heard much within the last 10 or 20 years of several parishes in the west of Ireland where several thousands of Roman Catholics have come over to the Established Church, but it is a most extraordinary fact that that conquest, which appears to be the only one to which the opponents of our course can look—that conquest was made, not by the agency of the Irish Church Establishment, but by a missionary propaganda, established and working from Eng and as its centre; in fact, by the agency of the voluntary principle, and not by the agency of the Established Church. Now, gentlemen, you are here as assembly of Liberals, but do not suppose you can on that account have no interest in the well-being of the Conservative party. So long as England is England there will be a Liberal party and a Conservative party. Ay, even if it were possible to do what I do not think we wish to do—alter the form of the Government of the country—even if we had a republic, we should still have, as there is to so great an extent in America, a Liberal party and a Conservative party, the one wishing to move on more freely and fearlessly, and the other more apprehensive as to the mischief sudden changes might do. Therefore, gentlemen, we have a great interest in the Conservative party. It is for the interest of each party that the other party should be truthful and honest in its proceedings, and firm in its principles. You may rely upon it that you cannot have great demoralisation in one party without that demoralisation tainting and infecting the other; and, therefore, although we are the foes of that party, yet, always presuming they do not so far succeed as to impress their policy on the Government of the country, I wish them well. In my opinion, they have been pursuing a suicidal course; they have forgotten the sources of their strength, they have sought to create a new and fictitious strength in an awkward affectation of liberal methods of proceeding. What is it that we have a right to expect from the Conservative party? Certainly not much instruction in the way of intelligible change, but we have a right to expect firmness and courage in the assertion and maintenance of its principles; and rely upon it that the Liberal party is all the better for being face to face with another party of different shades of opinion, making it its pride and boast to show courage and tenacity in adherence to its creed. That is the especial work of the Conservative party; and although it may be backward with regard to many objects of public utility, it is a useful element in the composition of political society, and such a party will never fail to attract my respect. They may expect from us that

we should be more active in advising a policy of improvement. We may expect from them that they should be more tenacious in insisting on consistency to creed—that is not what we have had at their hands. We have seen within the last two years an unparalleled manœuvre executed by the leaders of that party and by its followers, who perhaps had not much left to them except what is commonly called "Hobson's choice." I am not going to animadverst on the course of proceeding which has resulted in the adoption of political changes from which we anticipate great benefit to the country, and a great increase of strength to the Constitution, but I direct my view to the future, and I ask what is the Conservative creed at this moment? What are the prospects and intentions of the Conservative party with regard to the policy to be pursued in the coming Parliament? (Cries of "None!") A gentleman says "None." Let us see if we can gain any light on this subject, which is one of an entertaining character, if it did not suggest some melancholy reflections. It is really singular to observe how much elbow-room in the direction of Radicalism is allowed at this moment by the agents of the Conservative party to those who come forward under its banner. I read not long ago the manifesto of a gentleman who solicits the suffrages of the vast town of Birmingham in the Conservative interest. Well, now, what does he say? He begins with a legal definition of Trades' Unions, to which I do not object. He then proposes to abolish the law of primogeniture, that is the next article of creed of this Conservative candidate; and the third is to make the use of the ballot optional. Next he goes out of his way to introduce, by way of a side dish at the entertainment, the reform of the Prayer-book, and then he proceeds to state that the last Reform Bill does not at all correspond with his views as to the borough franchise; and the only thing that will satisfy him is residential household suffrage. And that is the man, gentlemen, who is put up—for was put up—for whether he has sunk in the political ocean or not I really do not know—under the colours of the Constitutional party, who, forsooth, oppose Mr. Bright as a dangerous man, who ought on no account to be admitted within the walls of Parliament. Now, gentlemen, one of the objections I have to this method of proceeding is the extreme confusion of ideas it produces. When I hear an address of this character I own to you I do not know whether I stand on my head or on my heels. Though he thinks there ought to be a wide and extensive reform in the Irish Church, yet he objects to the policy that we have proposed for its disestablishment and general disendowment. Well, now, gentlemen, we should see in investigation of this interesting question what is the Conservative creed, that, at all events, we had lit at least upon one article of that creed. The present Government, we will suppose, then, has great toleration and indulgence for all manner of purely political vagaries, but one thing it cannot stand, and that is tampering with the integrity of the Established Church of Ireland. Well, but is this so? Is that the ground that has been adopted by the Constitutional party? Is it the *sine qua non* of admission into its ranks, or of admission to political office, that the integrity of the Irish Church shall be maintained? No, gentlemen, we don't require to go far for proof that it is not so. I believe our esteemed friend Colonel Wilson Patten has been challenged to say whether, if Mr. Disraeli proposes the disestablishment of the Irish Church,

he will vote against it, and that he has declined to give a reply. And the authority of Sir Stafford Northcote, Secretary of State for India, has been asked whether, under the circumstances, he will resist the dis-establishment of the Irish Church, but he says he refuses to go to Parliament with a pledge of that kind. What is it, gentlemen, what will-o'-the-wisp, what phantasm is it that this Constitutional party is proposing to you? We thought that the article of maintaining the Irish Church was really written in their addresses, and on their understanding, and in their hearts. But it does not appear that that is the case with those gentlemen in high authority. I will take another case relating to a person whom I cannot but name with unfeigned respect—the younger son of Lord Derby. What kind of allegiance does he profess to the Irish Church, which it is our wickedness that we are endeavouring to tamper with? He says, "In the legislation which will presumably follow upon the proceedings of the Commission, there must, I conceive, be some considerable departure from the plan of simply rearranging within the limits of the Established Church the endowments of which she is now the recipient, and it is impossible to avoid seeing that the present temper of the country is against making, on the one hand, any further charge on the revenues of the United Kingdom in aid of religious bodies unconnected with the Established Church, while, on the other hand, there are means which in many instances are undoubtedly superfluous for uses for which they had been originally intended." Now, that cuts a pretty large hole in the remaining article in the Conservative creed, for it appears perfectly possible, without losing any title to be a Conservative in North-West Lancashire, for a man like Colonel Wilson Patten to decline to pledge himself what to do, if Mr. Disraeli gives the word of command, against the Established Church, aid perfectly possible for the younger son of Lord Derby—it is not necessary to ask what the elder son of Lord Derby is disposed to do—plainly to proclaim to you that in his opinion the property of the Church of Ireland cannot be, and ought not to be, confined to the uses of that Church. So much for that half of the one article of the Conservative creed. But there is another half to it, and it is this. You have heard an infinity of outcry about Popery and about the Liberals and the Nonconformists of this country, and the Presbyterians of Scotland, as being the insidious agents and friends of Popery. The meaning of that is a charge that they intend to give the Church property taken from the Church to the religious uses of the Presbyterians and the Roman Catholics. That is the charge that is insinuated under these words. You know perfectly well how untrue it is; you know that we who, as public men, have taken part in this movement, have from the time when the Government glanced at a plan of that kind declared our insurmountable objection to it; and you know also that even if we had not declared that objection, even if we had been so unwise as to fall in with that policy, the determined resistance of the people of the three countries would have made it impossible to carry it into effect. But I am now testing the Conservative creed, and I have shown you the Conservative creed allows of taking away money from the Established Church. But let us see if it does not also allow of giving money for the

purposes of the Roman Catholics as well. I find in the address of Captain Stanley these words:—"I should strongly resist any plan which tended to secularise any part of revenues which have been solemnly and deliberately devoted to religious purposes by their donors." Now, observe those two things, gentlemen. On the one hand, money is to be taken from the Established Church of Ireland; on the other hand, the money is not to be secularised. Now, as to the meaning of the word "secularised." I should like to give you one sentence. Some gentlemen have asked me if I am in favour of secularising this property. I should like to ask them what is meant by to secularise Church property. If they are governed in the exposition of the term by history and law, they would find it rather difficult to explain, because, gentlemen, you ought to know in ancient times in the greater part, if not the whole, of Europe, the law of the Church divided the Church property into four parts. Of those four parts, one, I think, if I remember rightly, went to the bishop, one went to the clergy, one went to the fabric, and one went to the poor. Well, but if the ancient ecclesiastical law and the ancient canon law of Europe in the Middle Ages recognised the needs of the people, especially the poorer part of the people, as being within the legitimate application of Church property, then I think I have a right to ask those who ask me whether I am for secularising the property of the Irish Church, what they mean by the word to "secularise;" and whether they intend to establish a new foundation of Church law, and to impose a stricter definition on the uses of Church property than our forefathers in Roman Catholic times—six or eight hundred or one thousand years ago? But there is no doubt what Captain Stanley means by secularising Church property. He thinks that money ought to be taken from the uses of the Established Church and given, not to the uses he calls secular, but to the direct purpose of teaching religion outside the Established Church—that is, to the uses of the Presbyterians and Roman Catholics in Ireland. Well, therefore, gentlemen, so far as Captain Stanley is concerned, is it not perfectly idle that the men of North-West Lancashire should be stirred up in the name of the Constitution, in the name of Church and State, in the name of the Queen's supremacy, and I know not what, but probably in the name of "No Popery" too, to support a man who is going to do for religious bodies in Ireland that which his opponent and my noble friend Lord Harrington steadily refuse to do? And is this only an examination of the creed of an individual? Certainly not. The son of Lord Derby never can be unimportant as an individual, and the son of Lord Derby is not merely the son of Lord Derby, he is the latest addition to the official phalanx of Her Majesty's Government. And in the very crisis and heat of this election a man who undisguisedly and manfully proclaims his intention to take the property of the Irish Church and to give it to other religious bodies for their purposes as religious bodies—that very man is at this moment brought forward, and not only put forward and adopted by the party in North-West Lancashire, but is taken into the body of the Administration which has declared that our plan of disestablishing the Church will inflict upon the country consequences worse than those of foreign conquest. Now, gentlemen, is it possible for inconsistency, for absurdity, for mockery to public understanding, to go further than

this? Well, gentlemen, we cut down the Conservative creed to one article, then we cut off half of that article, and now we have cut out the remaining half. And what is the Conservative or Constitutional creed? Why, it is this, gentlemen. It is not to support any one measure or any one institution; it is not to be bound to the maintenance of any one principle. It is simply this—to this article I believe there will be a rigid adherence—it is to intend to vote for maintaining Her Majesty's Government in power.

Having spoken of the Conservative party, I will now, if you will allow me, say a few words upon the position of the Conservative Government, which is undoubtedly a very peculiar one. Gentlemen, I am not here to say that I think the principles upon which that Ministry has acted are compatible with what is called political honour, but I am here to say, without the smallest doubt, that great advantage has been derived from the laxity of their creed and practice—I will not say now with regard to the question of Reform, which is for the moment, as to most of its points at all events, set aside; but immense advantage has redounded to the country with respect to this great question of the condition of Ireland and the disestablishment of the Irish Church, from the fact that the Conservative Government have been in office. I am thankful from my heart, on public grounds, that at the commencement of this year it was they and not we who held the reins of State. Being in office they were under responsibility; when in office it was impossible for them to overlook the fact, however little they may now try to make of it, that for three years constitutional and personal liberty had been suspended in Ireland as an absolute necessity for the maintenance of the public peace and the security of life and property. They could not avoid announcing an Irish policy, and in that they could not escape the question of education and religion. They were compelled to declare their intentions, which were wholly foreign and opposed to the general and deliberate decisions of the people of this country, who, with the people of Ireland, would not accept the policy which was shadowed out by the First Minister of the Crown and by the Minister of Ireland. According to that policy we were now, for the first time, to maintain out of the public purse a University for the purposes of a particular religious denomination, and two new Established Churches were to be created and endowed in Ireland. An enormous strength was given to us and to our cause by these extraordinary intentions, and by the adoption of this policy by the Government it gave us a vantage-ground which we have never lost. It prevented Her Majesty's Government from appealing as they might otherwise have appealed, to the religious passion of the country with boldness and with effect. But suppose we had been in office and they had been in Opposition, it would have been our duty to propose the very same thing that we have proposed now; but we should have heard nothing then about the willingness of the Prime Minister and his colleagues to establish religious equality in Ireland. We should have heard nothing of the Roman Catholic University, and there would have been nothing but an animated, passionate, spirit-stirring appeal to the Protestant feeling of the country by 280 gentlemen in Parliament, bound together for a sacred principle, firm and chivalrous in their adherence to that principle, and deter-

mined to defend it to the death. That would have been an opposition much more formidable for us to confront than the half-hearted, indecisive, paltering opposition—that paltering opposition that we have met with, watered down to the extreme of debility: the Government telling us, in a great Constitutional battle, that we should wait until the opening of new Parliament—sometimes flying to the seventh heaven of rhetorical exaggeration, and telling us that we were proposing that which was worse than foreign conquest. All these absurdities—all these refusals to be bound and pledged in matters elementary in the creed of every practical statesman—all these declarations that it is necessary to reduce bishops, to remodel the Church—all those declarations, like those of Lord Stanley, that portions of its revenue must be given to other religions—what do they show? They show the voice of the Tower of Babel. There are scarcely two men who speak in the same language. One man is for one policy, another man for another; and it is amid these disordered ranks, I am thankful and happy to say, that the great Liberal army of the country, knowing its own mind and purpose, approaches it from stage to stage with the firm determination that, so far as depends on human strength and courage, our end shall be attained. I sometimes hear it said that it is the intention of the Government to give way, and that they will produce at the commencement of Parliament a plan larger, more comprehensive, more sweeping than that which up to this time we have been accustomed to consider comprehensive enough, and which is now before you in the name of the Liberal party. Now, do you think there is any foundation for that, or do you not? I cannot tell, but it is a legitimate subject for political speculation. There is nothing new under the sun; and after what has happened in former days, this may happen in the days that are about to come. Our business is to be prepared for all contingencies, and it is impossible for me to express a confident opinion whether, when the new Parliament meets, the language of the Government will be that the disestablishment of the Irish Church is worse than foreign conquest, or that their objection to our mode of proceeding was merely that it was too limited and narrow a method; that, instead of legislating, instead of devising great and statesmanlike schemes, we merely pottered over the production of a miserable abortion, but that they are the men who will make a clean sweep of the whole concern. On that ground we challenge the adhesion of the Liberals of this country; these are the two alternatives, and I am not bold or confident enough to tell you which will be presented to you; but I wish to make this observation. I have said that I am thankful the present Government were in power when we were able to produce this great question, and bring it to a position so advanced; but I cannot allow this method of the passing of measures by men who, in principle, are utterly opposed to them, to be dismissed from view without a remark.

Unfortunately, a very large number of the great measures of our time have been passed by those parties. The repeal of the Test Act of 1828 was forced on the Government of the Duke of Wellington. Roman Catholic Emancipation, in 1829, was forced upon the same Government. The first plan of Reform in Parliament, which took effect in 1832, was resisted by the Tory party of this country until they were compelled

to read the whole question in the lurid light of the fires of Bristol and of Nottingham. That is not all. After that came the controversy on the Corn-laws. Sir Robert Peel determined not to wait for a popular convulsion, and what was his reward?—that he left political life as a man proscribed by the party which he had led. This does not exhaust the catalogue. The same course was unfortunately pursued with regard to the second chapter of the history of Reform. Reform was stoutly, tenaciously resisted throughout the Session of 1866, until we were ejected from office, and it was again rejected when the population of London, indignant at the manner in which the subject was paltered with, began to meet in great assemblies, claimed the right to go to Hyde Park and make known their grievances, and when the world was astounded at hearing that in the centre of the English metropolis the railings of Hyde Park had been torn down. You see the policy of the party opposed to you. It is not that you will not get from them the measures you get from us: it is that you will get them at that stage at which, instead of enlightened conviction, a slavish fear has become the motive. Now I aver, without fear of contradiction, that this Constitutional party, by waiting, strikes a blow at the Constitution such as we have never dealt to it; that it destroys faith, destroys confidence, destroys the ties which bind man to man in public as well as in private life, and undermines at once the belief of the people in the fidelity and sagacity of their rulers and their disposition to respect even the sternest resolves of the Government; when we know from a long and repeated experience that all which is required of them is to be a little more violent, a little more menacing, to take steps to violate the laws of the country, and then that all they desire will be conceded. Do not for one moment suppose that I mean to compare the proceedings of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel with regard to Roman Catholic emancipation with the proceedings we have recently witnessed, for when the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, foregoing their deep and cherished convictions, frankly told the country that they accepted emancipation, not as a good, but as the lesser of two evils, and that if the people of this country were not prepared to accept it they must be prepared for the risk—when the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel made that avowal, however painful to themselves or whatever disparagement it might imply to their political sagacity, at least they acted the part of honest and straightforward and truth-speaking men, and there was a great mitigation of the evil; but the climax of mischief is at last arrived when those who execute these extraordinary changes of opinion and of conduct, instead of frankly confessing, after the manner of those distinguished statesmen, that they have seen cause to change, and therefore have changed, have to invent far-fetched and flimsy notions about their own long-cherished opinions, about the “education” of their party, and I know not what, and by palming upon the public all those miserable pretexts, convert that which would at any rate be an honourable retreat into a retreat which is utterly ignominious. Gentlemen, as I have said that, allow me to except from the scope of my proposition one statesman. There is one statesman connected with the Government who was a party to that great change of opinion and of policy, but who has not attempted to disguise it—and I am thankful to

say that he is a Lancashire man—I mean Lord Stanley. Lord Stanley descended to none of these subterfuges. At the Conservative banquet at Bristol, he said to the assembled guests, “Rely upon it, gentlemen, we shall not abandon the posts we were appointed to defend without having first arrived at the clear conviction that it was necessary for the public good.” That was an honest and a manly declaration, and I respect the man who made it. It is in my power to do little towards placing you in a position to form enlightened judgments on public affairs, but I rejoice to think how abundant are the aids and instruments now supplied in every shape to the masses of the population in this country, and especially to that which is not the least intelligent portion of our population—I mean the people of Lancashire. So, that, however I might regret my own defective power, I feel satisfied that you will be well supplied with adequate opportunities and means of judging the right. And, gentlemen, it is needful that you should, for you have a great responsibility before you. The Duke of Wellington in 1829 glanced at civil war, and said, “You must take the policy recommended, or else as honest men and courageous men you must be prepared to face the consequences.” I have only to point to the actual state of Ireland to show that in Ireland you have been obliged to put an end to personal freedom, and that the liberty of the people depends upon the will of the Executive Government, instead of the firm foundation of the law. You may judge from that, and I trust you will judge, whether there is or is not a necessity for dealing boldly and resolutely with the case of Ireland, be it by the present Government, or be it any other. Let the present Government propose the policy of resistance or the policy of concession, I feel certain that I may presume to say, on the part of the bulk of those professing Liberal opinions, our course will be governed by no mere avidity for office—which we have on a former occasion known how to sacrifice when we thought it would serve the interests of the country—but simply by a desire to discern in what way, of all the ways that shall be opened to us, we ought to walk in order to promote our internal welfare. It is clear the Church of Ireland offers to us indeed a great question, but even that question is but one of a group of questions. There is the Church of Ireland, there is the land of Ireland, there is the education of Ireland: there are many subjects, all of which depend upon one greater than them all; they are all so many branches from one trunk, and that trunk is the tree of what is called Protestant ascendancy. Gentlemen, I look, for one, to this Protestant people to put down Protestant ascendancy which pretends to seek its objects by doing homage to religious truth, and instead of consecrating politics desecrates religion. It is upon that system that we are banded together to make war. So long as that system subsists, our covenant endures for the prosecution of that purpose for which we seek your assistance; and because although, as I said early in these remarks, we have paid instalments to Ireland, the mass of the people would not be worthy to be free if they were satisfied with instalments, or if they could be contented with anything less than justice. We therefore aim at the destruction of that system of ascendancy which, though it has been crippled and curtailed by former measures, yet still must be allowed by all to exist. It

is still there, like a tall tree of noxious growth, lifting its head to heaven and darkening and poisoning the land so far as its shadow can extend; it is still there, gentlemen, and now at length the day has come when, as we hope, the axe has been laid to the root of that tree, and it nods and quivers from its top to its base. It wants, gentlemen, one stroke more—the stroke of these elections. It will then, once for all, totter to its fall, and on the day when it falls the heart of Ireland will leap for joy, and the mind and conscience of England and Scotland will repose with than cful satisfaction upon the idea that something has been done towards the discharge of national duty, and towards deepening and widening the foundations of public strength, security, and peace.

**END OF
TITLE**